

**Stage to Screen: Pivoting from Traditional Theatrical Education Using Selected
Techniques of Michael Chekhov**

by

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

University of Pittsburgh

2020

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
DIETRICH SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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University of Pittsburgh, 2020

This thesis is motivated by a pedagogical need that I identified while engaging with actors who graduated from undergraduate theatre programs. Many were unprepared to navigate the technical demands of camera work, and had difficulty transitioning to meet the different emotional needs of each scene. I explored the disparity between stage and screen acting and submit that effective transition to film requires an education in techniques enabling combination of the body, mind, and spirit of the actor. A seminal training experience led to my consideration of Michael Chekhov's techniques towards acting for camera, as Chekhov provides a method grounded in the notion of integration to engender a "feeling of the whole".

I have theoretically and empirically investigated the outcome of introducing, synthesizing, and applying selected techniques of Michael Chekhov. I proposed a new acting for camera one-semester B.A. undergraduate course at the University of Pittsburgh, *Acting on Camera with Ease: Camera Acting Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov*. I explored course topics I believed would maximally benefit the undergraduate actors. I paired these explorations with scripted scene work from current film, television, and commercials, audition techniques, and peer audits to demonstrate what serves the performer in real time. A course of this type may indeed be an essential part of the undergraduate actor's formation, readying students for a variety of performance contexts. Course outcomes showed that the Chekhov technique enhances the actor's ability to remain both emotionally and physically engaged and honest during camera performance.

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Acknowledgements

Dear ones, I thank you.

To my family, friends, contemporaries, cohorts, mentors, students, teachers, artists, risktakers and art makers...I thank you.

Meg Pryor, my cohort, I thank you for sharing this journey with me, walking together in solidarity, commiserating angst and anxiety, lifting me up with support and love, making space for celebrations, leading by example and with seeming fearlessness. You will never know how much I value this shared experience. Your bravery and willingness to say yes and figure it out later has become the lesson I hold most precious...almost as precious as the Little One's cheeks...I thank you.

To the students with whom I shared space, time, fear, willingness, curiosity, and growth...I thank you.

Specifically, to the fifteen students who kept showing up prepared, who supported one another and me, who allowed themselves to be seen by revealing their thoughts for the camera, you also made this...I thank you.

To my faculty mentors who guided me, asked questions, offered support, creatively problem-solved, inspired, held me accountable, cheered from the sidelines, gave me space to feel overwhelmed and lifted me up afterward...I thank you. Your names are Michelle, Bria, Karen, Kelly, Ken, Kathy, Cindy, Annmarie and Ricardo.

To the supportive staff who showed such patience and support with me throughout my tenure...I thank you.

To Chris Bange for answering the phone four years ago and telling me that I should know more about this thing called an MFA in Performance Pedagogy, and also, for your positivity and support as I traversed this new life...I thank you.

To my dear friend, mentor, collaborator, teacher, director, casting director, and sister-by-choice, Nike Imoru, your presence has helped me find this path, this calling, this light...I thank you.

To my Mom, Dad, Sherry, Mike and the girls, you have done so much to support me during this process. I wouldn't have made it without you. Gary and Margot are lucky granddogs...We thank you.

To my wife, Marie...I thank you. I love you.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Impetus for Thesis

The training and techniques required for a successful transition from stage to screen acting remain undernourished in the University of Pittsburgh's undergraduate theatre program. While B.F.A. programs often require at least one course in "Acting for Camera" before students graduate. O-camera-training is a requisite for B.F.A. acting students in many programs, e.g. SUNY Purchase, Carnegie Mellon University and Emerson College. B.A. programs may offer similar courses on rotation only every two to four years (or more). The University of Pittsburgh, for example, has offered a camera performance course only once in the past seven years. As a camera technique instructor at L.A. On Camera Training Center in Los Angeles, I regularly engaged with actors who had graduated from undergraduate theatre programs. Many of them came from prestigious conservatory programs, and I was both surprised and confused by what appeared to be an educational gap.

I discovered that the actors were uninformed or unprepared to navigate the demands of different angles, lenses, and frames. Furthermore, they were unable to transition effectively to meet the different emotional demands required by each scene; the crew often needed to hold for the actors to recall their research and understanding. This represents an unacceptably low degree of preparation for screen work for the professional working actor, demonstrative of an unfortunate coursework offering gap in many undergraduate theatre departments.

Central to my understanding of the nature of this coursework gap was an interview with Dr. Nike Imoru, Casting Society of America (C.S.A), whose professional experience includes roles

as Professional Movement Choreographer, Theatre Director, stage actor, Artistic Director of a Small Professional Theater (SPT), film actress, Theatre Professor, C.S.A. Casting Director, and Executive Producer. Her analysis revealed these specific differences between film and theatre acting:

1. Preparation
2. Voice and Volume
3. The Body's "Volume"
4. Direction
5. Sequence of Story

I offer a brief explanation of the differences between stage and camera acting using the above-cited list as a foundational template. Regarding number 1, Preparation, performances occur in real time. Stage actors spend hours of rehearsal time exploring their characters' identities, physicality, relationships, as well as their lines, over a multi-week period. In film, in contrast, performances do not happen in real time, and film scenes are almost always shot out of order. The film actor might have to shift quickly from a scene portraying a deep betrayal, followed immediately by a scene that requires a joyful and authentic response. There is little to no time allocated for the screen actor's transition; transitional time is typically technical and focused on the crew. Film actors are additionally often given new lines or entire scene re-writes just prior to shooting as well, requiring a flexibility and textual agility that can ultimately be supported by proper instruction.

For number 2, Voice and Volume, differences can be summarized quickly. While camera acting, your co-star is with you in the room, or at the location, quite possibly within an intimate distance. There are recording microphones in use that can pick up even the slightest utterance. The stage actor, on the other hand, must fill an entire space, possibly a large theater, only

vocally. In number 3, The Body's "Volume" in each form, the on-stage actor must fully embody their actions, gestures, and expressions such that their work is broadly interpretable to everyone in the house. Conversely, when acting on camera while the actor must still be fully embodied as their character, they must be mindful of the intimacy and subtlety created by the proximity of the camera.

A significant difference between stage and screen acting is the role of the director in each process. Regarding number 4, Directors, directors in theatre coordinate actors. They spend innumerable hours over the course of several weeks working with the actors on blocking, relationships, characterization, and analysis. They give notes throughout the rehearsal process until opening night. This is in stark contrast to a director's role in acting for camera. Screen directors direct the scene, rather than the actors. After casting is complete, the director trusts that the actors are professional, i.e. in this context, do not require coaching. If an actor needs on-screen coaching throughout and the director must keep cutting, time and money are wasted. Thus a film director requires an actor who is capable of self-directing, properly filling the frame, staying on their marks, having a full and rich inner life, playing the scene as a "happening" i.e. self-contained and internally consistent in incident and event, and playing the plot points and story with a clear rationale as interpreted by the director. Film directors focus on the look and feel of the scene, fully expecting the actor to plug into the scene having done all of their own work beforehand.

With respect to number 4, Sequence of Story, the stage actor starts their performance at the beginning of the story and ends it at the end. They experience the entire life of the character — usually in a linear order — during that story's life. As alluded to above (see #1 above Preparation), in screen work, filming occurs in order with location and schedule as the priorities

as opposed to narrative structure. Hence, film is rarely shot in a linear fashion, posing obvious obstacles for actors who are trained for on-stage performances only.

The combined differences between stage and screen acting demand deeper reflection and articulation. Clearly, there are significant differences between these two forms of acting that each require consideration in an actor's education. In fact, the disparity between stage and screen acting requires an education in techniques that enable adequate combination of the body, the mind, and the spirit of the actor. This kind of training and philosophy will bridge the gaps between stage and screen acting by allowing actors in undergraduate theatre departments to move between mediums with greater flexibility and ultimately to approach screen acting with greater skill and confidence.

During my entrance interview with Dennis Schebetta, former Head of M.F.A. Performance Pedagogy at the University of Pittsburgh, I was asked what I might enjoy researching, should I be offered the candidacy. I admitted that, while I was aware of a missing component in undergraduate acting training surrounding work in front of the camera, I was not yet aware of how to address it. I explained that, while the younger actors with whom I had worked had performance training, understood the story, and were able to analyze scripts with great detail and offer rationale for their choices, the same actors weren't able to hold onto "the inner fire" and life of characters inside the close-up frame during filming. They additionally weren't able to jump from scene to scene without adequate references to their notes and prior research, and there didn't appear to be an integration between the body, mind, and spirit of the characters they were embodying.

The course I developed during my candidacy inspired by this need, called *Acting on Camera with Ease: Camera Acting Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov*, addresses and fills several training gaps I witnessed as a professional coach specifically related to actors newly graduated from undergraduate theatre departments. Chekhov provides us with a method that

is grounded in the notion of integration of the mind, body, and spirit of the actor to engender a “feeling of the whole” (Chekhov, 1991, p. 21). The four topics of exploration that I believed would benefit the undergraduate actors in my course are (1) atmosphere, (2) radiate and receive, (3) imagination (as opposed to research), and (4) psychological gesture. I paired these explorations with scripted scene work from current films, television, and commercials. Actors in the class practiced audition techniques for film, television, and commercials. They utilized two-person scene work and “solo” scene work in close-up, and were able to act as peer auditors so that they might see what serves the performer in real time. We engaged in Chekhovian exercises throughout the course, which culminated in a final performance in which the actors were asked to employ the techniques practiced throughout the term.

This thesis includes six chapters. Chapter 1 reveals my inspiration for background of the developed course, as outlined above. In Chapter 2, I further explore the urgency and need for an acting for camera course within the B.A. program at the University of Pittsburgh as well as operational practicalities. I was able to develop the course work on a limited budget to overcome typical departmental barriers to an inclusion of a course of this type. The pedagogical context for the course development and execution is offered in Chapter 3, including further description of the course, definition of Chekhov’s approach “calling an audible,” and a rationale for the selected exercises. In Chapter 4, I offer a detailed breakdown of teaching and assignments given during the course. A review of relevant literature is given in Chapter 5, followed by a conclusion in Chapter 6, in which I revisit my thesis question and offer reflections and possible revisions for another version of this course.

1.2 My Personal Journey

I pursued my undergraduate degree at a state school in Wisconsin in their small-but-mighty theatre department. There, as in most undergraduate B.A. programs in the late '90s, the technique offered was the American Method. Acting classes, at times, felt more like group therapy sessions, as actors unearthed their emotional connections to the characters they were developing. There was an endless supply of tissues available. One class was even nicknamed “the crying class.” While I found this work to be fascinating (mostly observing my classmates uncover their own material), I never found the work “in character” to be particularly exciting. When I was introduced to the school’s International Exchange Program, I eagerly began looking into my options and quickly discovered that the University of Winchester, U.K. was the right choice for me.

While at Winchester, my mind was opened to the use of the body as an actor. Instruction was primarily based on the story’s bodies tell. I was riveted! I no longer needed to remove myself from the present moment in order to excavate an old memory in the hopes of eliciting an emotional state. I could instead physically articulate my body and let the audience do the work with me. This shift in pedagogy was an enlightening experience that changed the way I approached my work as an actor for over two decades.

I assumed that I would have to keep mining those early lessons to continue to develop my own technique. I was wrong. It wasn’t until I was discussing my summer plans with Cynthia Croot, Head of Performance at the University of Pittsburgh Theatre Arts Department, after my second semester at the University of Pittsburgh that she opened the Michael Chekhov Association website and said, “You should do this!” My degree required a certain amount of external training and, at that time I didn’t have anything lined up. So, I thought, sure, why not? I applied for a grant, received funding, and went to Connecticut College for two weeks.

My integrated body-mind-spirit was awakened after the first two sessions. I dug in fiercely to the work led by Craig Mathers, Sol Garre, Bethany Caputo, Dawn Arnold, Jessica Cerullo, Ragnar Freidank, and Joanna Merlin. As we explored the power generated by a psychophysically connected actor (psychophysicality is explained in more detail in Section 3). We spent two weeks investigating atmosphere, concentration, imagination, play, ease, and archetypal and psychological gestures. The experience was so impactful, I immediately began to consider how I could redirect my thesis such that I could share this work with my students. I was inspired to use this seminal training experience in an area of demonstrable need from my own professional experience; screen acting formation for undergraduates. This intention led to my development of coursework, exercises, and assignments that comprise my thesis course.

2.0 Addressing Departmental Need

In this chapter, I present the known history of any version of coursework directed at acting for camera study in the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Pittsburgh. I discuss the extant budgetary limitations and the existing departmental resources, and reveal how, with external support and non-traditional resourcing, I was able to overcome the resultant operational challenges.

Through a meeting conducted the morning of February 12th, 2019 in the Theatre Arts office that included Maggie Bupp, University of Pittsburgh Theatre Arts Department Administrator, Joshua Oliver, Graduate Student Service Administrator, and Annmarie Duggan, Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts, it was surmised that the last curricular acting for camera course was offered prior to 2013. Mr. Oliver had referred to the hardcopy syllabus bank and was unable to find a record of such a course; however, the hardcopy records only go back to 2013, so determining an exact timeframe by this pursuit was not possible.

Ms. Duggan felt certain that Sam Turich, Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, was the last person to teach any version of an acting for camera course offering. However, Mr. Turich confided via phone interview later that same morning that he never taught such a course. As a result, I believe it is accurate to deduce that it has been at least seven years since the undergraduate population at the University of Pittsburgh has been given the opportunity to train in any form of acting for camera technique; there is demonstrable need for this course offering ensuring comprehensive and diverse training. But to what extent is this coursework necessary for today's theatre graduate?

I believe this coursework is increasingly relevant and may be core for today's acting graduate. There are more opportunities now than ever before for actors to work in television and film. In an article published by the National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA), it is reported that in 2019 "a record 532 scripted shows aired...to put that in perspective, there were 210 in 2009" (NCTA, 2019). The increasing number of opportunities in television and film could mean that those who are prepared for on-screen work find a greater chance of success post-graduation. This necessitates coursework in acting for the camera that prepares future graduates to relate to a lens and understand how they connect to tapings in an audition room.

In short, the growing number of television and film opportunities signal the time for a pivot in traditional theatre department teaching. Departments and schools that do not respond to the shifting need for screen work will unfortunately be left behind in favor of those who do cater to needed elements of acting for the camera, thus implying financial as well as enrollment impacts for such departments. Clearly, there is a material consequence for departments who fail to meet this need and offer this coursework as an adaptation to the industry. Even if the need is clear and there is interest in making a change, how do we overcome real and perceived limits to offering new coursework such as this?

B.A. programs in the United States tend to offer many dozens of majors and foci. As a result, resources are limited, space is valuable, and external support is dwindling. While these factors can create a culture averse to risk and loathing to innovate, it is completely feasible to introduce new and relevant coursework aimed at the teaching of acting for the camera given departmental engagement and creative solutions. To use my course as an example, Ashley Martin, University of Pittsburgh's Departmental Operations Manager for our department, was open to finding solutions. Upon reviewing available venues and resources, she was able to secure a generous space for this course.

We were placed in the Henry Heymann Theatre, a 137-seat thrust stage. In addition to the space, Martin was able to provide a 27-inch monitor and a small mobile cart upon which the monitor was strapped. The monitor was essential to view playback of the scenes. Our request for multiple colors of spike tape was also met; the tape was used to create marks on the stage floor as we set the actors' blocking.

The Department was missing one key element for this course though, a camera. I needed to seek assistance outside of the department. The option to rent a camera for an entire semester block was unfortunately denied by the University's Equipment Lending Program.

During my first semester at Pitt, I made an alliance with several faculty members within the Film Studies Program including Randall Halle, Director of Film and Media Studies; Robert Clift, Assistant Professor; Kevin Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Broadcast; and Carl Kurlander, Senior Lecturer. When I explained the challenge to them and asked for assistance finding a reliable, knowledgeable, undergraduate student with their own camera, they sent my request to their networks. I interviewed three candidates for the position and was extremely pleased to offer the T.A. position to Liam Brown, an undergraduate Communications Major seeking a Media Certificate. Further securing Mr. Brown's three credits for the course required roughly two hours of my time in meetings with his advisor.

With creative problem-solving and use of the academic and mentorship networks created in my first year at Pitt, I was able to craft a course which offered students acting for camera including all the fundamental provisions like space, a monitor, a camera, a camera person, spike tape, and, of course, acting blocks. However, barriers to consistent inclusion of novel and necessary coursework, such as acting for camera in undergraduate curricula, may not only be a matter of resources. Many students have multiple majors and commitments and can only take the

minimum coursework in order to satisfy requirements. In the same vein, the culture of individual programs may not easily permit inclusion of new courses, barring that these are essential.

I might counter that a course of the type I developed and introduced in my thesis work is indeed an essential part of any actor's formation. It readies students for a variety of performance contexts and makes them highly marketable for film, television, and digital media work upon graduation. Moreover, and importantly, there is demonstrable student demand. At one point, there were 7 students on the thesis course waitlist (+50% of available enrollment). I firmly believe that this class would fill consistently if it was offered every year.

I believe practical blockages to new course creation may often be hurdled by ingenuity and a pedagogical belief in making things work. There are typical constraints on any new course: budget, time, space, and equipment. These requirements need not become practical or spiritual impediments and should never make meeting a dire need of today's theatre student impossible. Instead, the needs for this course presented an opportunity to use alliances and creativity to overcome limits and to "make it work." In the case of successful pilot courses which address core and market-driven yet unmet training needs for B.A. students, as in my course *Acting on Camera with Ease*, ongoing student demand linked to departmental financial incentive clearly motivates curricular adjustment and inclusion of these offerings.

3.0 Pedagogical Context

In my course, *Acting with Ease: Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov for On Set Performance*, I engaged both theoretical and experiential knowledge. I employed both my invaluable training in Chekhov's techniques and those of my own studio training for film and television accumulated throughout my years of study in Los Angeles. Given that similar courses in our Department at the University of Pittsburgh had been on hiatus for at least seven years, and as the majority (13 of the 16) enrolled students had zero experience in front of any camera. My aim for the course was dual: to first introduce our students to acting for camera, and then explore a possible solution for the stage-to-screen training gap I observed as a coach in Los Angeles, via the Chekhov technique.

I had a hybrid of studio training I received under Jamison Haase, Founder and Instructor at L.A. On Camera Training Center, John Rosenfeld, of John Rosenfeld Studios, and Sam Christensen, Founder and creator of An Approach to Discover the Actor's Mythic and Archetypal Assignment. My years of experience as an actor along with my profound research into the written works of Michael Chekhov and the numerous individuals who have adapted his work for their own pedagogy at my disposal, a deliberate process of research and reflection helped me select the specific techniques and concepts I believed would be of maximal service to all actors in the course.

I also examine in the present chapter, the pedagogical context of this thesis through the writings of Chekhov and other practitioners, concentrating on the exercises explored in the developed thesis course. I first introduce here a phrase and practice that I found immensely helpful through the run of the course, "calling an audible" (Section I). Secondly, I will introduce and define the term "psychophysical" (Defined in Section 3.2 herein) as interpreted by Chekhov and current

practitioners of the technique (Section II). I then introduce Chekhov as teacher and the pedagogical methods he employed early in his career as an educator, and detail which methods I chose to employ in my instruction of his techniques (Section III). Finally, this Chapter will name and expand on the selected methods for this course: *Atmosphere, Radiate and Receive, Imagination,* and *Psychological Gesture* (Section IV). The Chapter will conclude with the theoretical outcomes of the class.

3.1 Defining “Calling an Audible”

“Calling an audible” can be defined as self-given permission to make changes to the lesson plan in real-time, as based on either the feedback from the actors due to an inspired thought emerging in scene work or exercises, or due to a random and wonderful happening outside of our classroom. In these moments, I was able to practice what Chekhov calls, “the pause” and respond truthfully, instinctually, and ultimately in service to the actor’s training. In *“Lessons for Teachers,”* in which numerous lectures given by Michael Chekhov were edited and compiled, he said, (Checkhov, 2018)

“When you have a pause, you must always be conscious that something will be done or that something has been done...the pause must always be the result of something, or it should be just before something” (p. 20). There will be several moments in this course during which I “called an audible”, and I have cited those moments, reflecting upon the pause I observed which lead me to make a decision to joyfully deviate from the planned lesson."

3.2 Psychophysical Acting Defined

Chekhov offers a detailed explanation of how he understands the term “psychophysical” in his text *To the Actor: On the Technique of Acting* (Chekhov, 1991). In the Preface, he defines the term by noting that “the human body and mind are inseparable. No work of the actor is completely psychological nor exclusively physical. The physical body (and character) of the actor must always be allowed to influence the psychology, and *vice versa*.” The premise of this style of acting is grounded in the belief that emotions are always physically manifested in the body through breath, gesture, voice, and relation to space.

Chekhov’s techniques bring awareness to an actor’s relationship between their body and their emotions. Leonard Petit, Director of the Michael Chekhov Acting Studio, writes about the psychophysical technique,

“The body and psychology are one thing. The body is developed and trained so that it becomes sensitive to this connection. Movement is not gymnastic, but psychological in that it affords us the experience of states and conditions of being” (Petit, 2020, p. 13).

Psychophysical acting, then, understands that when an actor who is conscious of their own actions acts in a specific and meaningful way that is connected to the character they will inevitably find themselves connected to an emotion. The path from emotion to action can be reversed and truthful performance will still be found.

In Chapter Two of Chekhov’s *Lessons for Teachers*, edited by Jessica Cerullo ((Chekhov, 2018), he notes that his "Four Brothers (the Senses of Ease, Beauty, Form, and the Whole from Appendix 8)" (Ashperger, 2008) are essential qualities for teaching. Chekhov encourages that, as an instructor of his method, you must be “giving” and “active” and that you must engage *a*

pedagogical performance upon entering the room, stating that you “must enter the room as a teacher.” He invites the teacher to “cross the threshold” with a prepared entrance and be “concentrated on giving with as much love as you can feel” (Lessons, p. 20). This lesson offers the students to see the “what” (entering of the room) and the “how” (the quality and intensity with which you do so) which is so deeply entrenched in Chekhov’s technique.

This attention to specificity and preparedness to enter the session offers us a glimpse into Form as related to Chekhov’s work. He uses Form to indicate the difference between a pedestrian reality to that of the space of learning. I engaged this pedagogical practice in part by adhering to a strict policy of timeliness, which brought awareness and value to our collective time together as a group. Additionally, once our session started, I changed my relationship to space by standing and taking my space in the center of the group, indicating that our time has shifted from the ordinary to the special, and that my role was now certainly one of teacher in addition to that of fellow actor.

As we cross the threshold to a pedagogical session with a *giving* (ready to engage the actors and impact the knowledge that would serve them) and *active* perspective (with energy, as opposed to a passive role), a *Sense of Beauty* is included. According to Chekhov, when we do anything beautifully, we are highlighting the difference between the “what” (any action) and the “how” (quality with which we perform that action). Before taking the space upon the beginning of class I would ask myself, “How do I wish to be seen today? What quality will serve the upcoming work?” and, in this way, I would fill my inner world with *giving* and *active* qualities.

Finally, the two remaining Brothers in Chekhov’s lessons, a *Sense of Ease* and a *Sense of the Whole* (Whole-ness), are at the core of sharing the method. Cynthia Ashperger writes, “The teacher is responsible for creating an atmosphere based on love, generosity, and trust. These must contain a Sense of Ease, which can be retained through an overall lightness and positivity, and they include both the body and the mind” (Ashperger, 2008, p. 97). One of the ways in which I

worked with Ease and Whole-ness in the thesis course was by participating in warm-ups alongside my students, finding humor when appropriate, and by supporting their moments of risk with positivity and encouragement. By working with and engaging Chekhov's *Four Brothers* as their instructor, I was able to lead the students by example.

3.3 The Selected Techniques

While there are numerous techniques and exercises developed by Chekhov and other leading practitioners, in this introductory course I limited my students' exposure and practice to four techniques: (1) *Atmosphere*, (2) *Radiate and Receive*, (3) *Imagination and Concentration*, and (4) *Psychological Gesture*. In this section, I will offer a brief description of each technique (expanded upon in Chapter Four). Chekhov defines *Atmosphere* as "the source of ineffable moods and waves of feeling that emanate from one's surroundings" (Chekhov, 1991, p. 26). He goes on to note that "*Atmospheres* enable the actor to create the element of the play and the part that cannot be expressed otherwise." At the core, *Atmosphere* is the feeling of the space, the character, the setting, the circumstances, and their relationships as imagined and embodied by the actor. Joanna Merlin, Chekhov's only surviving student, writes that *Atmosphere* is the "landscape in which you are acting" (Merlin, 2001, p. 66).

In *Lessons for the Professional Actor*, (Chekhov, 1987), Chekhov describes *Radiating* as "to give out everything I have inside" (p. 141). This was his way of describing how an actor, through training, could open themselves to the powerful non-verbal communication of their inner consciousness. Mala Powers contributes that *Radiating* is to "send out the invisible essence of whatever quality or emotion you wish." Actors could essentially learn to radiate their thoughts,

feelings, images, and relationship out to the audience and to their scene partners. Their partners, if they are able to remain open to transmission, will then *Receive* it and allow the intake to wash over them. This contributes to their relationship to themselves and their surroundings. The actors would then find themselves in a flow, or continuous relationship, with their scene partners, the audience, and the camera. The actor, through this practice, will naturally always be open and in the present moment.

Chekhov believed that all of the information an actor would need to gather for the creation of character could be learned through physical exploration of imagery arising through the text or exercises (*Imagination*). He believed that, “thinking and reasoning alone” will not serve the actor (Chekhov, 1991, p. 6), and that images could nurture the frayed connection between body and mind during the creative process. As an educator, he even disallowed the practice of notetaking during his sessions, believing that the practice would inhibit the body-mind connection. Chekhov relied deeply on the power of *Concentration* to curate this connection. He offers in *Lessons to the Professional Actor* that concentration allows the actor to “go deeply into oneself, so deeply that you will find all of your abilities trembling and willing to obey” (Chekhov, 1987, p. 42). He believed that the combined power of *Concentration and Imagination* would intuitively bring the actor closer to the circumstances of the scene.

The final technique, *Psychological Gesture*, is a technique created by Chekhov that aligns the thoughts, the feelings, and the will of the character with those of the actor. The movement is created by the actor using *Concentration and Imagination*, and physically expressing the psychology of the character into a single, repeatable gesture. Petit writes,

“Being in the body, these gestures come to the actor directly as knowledge, or a physical connection to the action. They can generate

impulses to satisfy the action...One doesn't have to convince oneself of anything, because the intellect is left out of the effort" (Petit, 2020, p. 49).

3.4 Theoretical Outcomes

Based on my developed understanding of the pedagogy of Michael Chekhov, including his approach to character and presence, as well as my first-hand experience with his techniques, my theoretical outcomes for my thesis course are as follows:

- Demonstrate an alternative approach to actor training.
- Provide student actors with specific tools (*Atmosphere, Radiate and Receive, Imagination and Concentration, Psychological Gesture*) that they can apply to their own processes of creation.
- Heighten their awareness to the body-mind connection.
- Develop an alternative to analytical exploration of character.
- Offer a short-cut to character specifically related to the non-linear filming sequence of film and TV.
- Through their selection and execution of the "Your Artist" assignment, give them an opportunity to explore a character within their type or to explore character work.
- Utilize the *Psychological Gesture* as a way to reconnect with character when filming out of sequence.
- Explore and create an effective *Atmosphere* for their auditions and scene work.
- Work from a place of physical *Ease*.
- Recognize that our character is in a constant state of *Radiating and Receiving*.

- Become more comfortable viewing themselves on screen and releasing critical thoughts of appearance and instead focus critical thoughts as they pertain to the execution of the techniques in support of the scene narrative.
- Practice taking direction and notes in a “real-time” filming environment.
- Learn how to find and hit your mark without indicating.
- Understand and modify performances physically and emotionally to fit the frame.
- Create several different characters from a psychophysical practice over the course of the term.
- Support and care for themselves and their scene partners by offering criticism in a positive, nurturing manner.

The research into the work of Michael Chekhov outlined above, aligned with my previous training and experience in on-camera performance, allowed me to create a strong foundation for my thesis course, *Acting with Ease: Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov for On Set Performance*. By engaging Chekhov’s *Four Brothers (the Senses of Ease, Beauty, Form, and the Whole, as expanded Appendix 8)* (Ashperger, 2008) as their instructor, I was able to lead the student actors by example. Moreover, I focused lessons on four key techniques, *Atmosphere, Radiate and Receive, Imagination and Concentration*, and *Psychological Gesture*, applying these to a number of theoretical outcomes focused on moving students towards embodied psychophysical practice to apply in their on-camera work.

4.0 Course Implementation and Structure

A complete and detailed overview of my course, *Acting with Ease: Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov for On Set Performance* is offered in this chapter. The presentation of each section of the course is accompanied by the relevant terminology, the techniques examined, my rationale for the chosen structure, as well as my personal reflections on the material and execution of each course section.

Structurally, the course was organized into groups of weeks:

- **Weeks 1-3:** Creating Basecamp: Introductions, Terms, Meeting the Camera, Meeting Chekhov, Audition Assignment, Atmosphere, Viewing and Feedback
- **Weeks 4 – 7:** Scene Assignment, Archetypal Gesture, Blocking and Marks, Adjusting for Camera
- **Weeks 8 – 12:** Psychological Gesture, “Your Artist” Assignment, Using the Techniques
- **Weeks 13 – 14:** Commercial Audition Assignment, Research Techniques, Client Perspective, Using the Techniques

Each of these are expounded upon in the following sections:

4.1 Weeks 1 – 3: Creating Basecamp: Introductions, Terms, Meeting the Camera, Meeting Chekhov, Audition Assignment, Atmosphere, Viewing and Feedback

4.1.1 Week 1, Class 1, Monday, August 26, 2019 (75-minute class)

The session began promptly at 3 pm (please see my notes on timeliness in Section II of the previous Chapter). I introduced myself and our T.A., Liam, as well as handed out the syllabus ([Appendix A](#)). I shared with the class that, although they had registered for and were attending a course which would fulfill their expectations of a traditional acting for camera course, we would also be exploring, adapting, and utilizing selected techniques from the Michael Chekhov method. The concept of the thesis course as it relates to my degree is fully explained in Chapter 2. I offered my rationale for the hybridization of Chekhov and camera performance as manifested in the course curriculum. I was clear, as per the syllabus, I reserved the right to modify the calendar to fit the needs of our work (see “calling an audible” as referenced in [Chapter 3, Section I](#)). Additionally, as this course would not precisely follow the course description, I communicated that each should decide if the course, as reintroduced by myself, was something they were still interested in pursuing.

I primarily led the session up until this point. It was then vitally important to open dialogue and discussion early as I have found in my performance classes to start the ensemble building, familiarity, and trust that is required for actors to take risks in their work. I wrote “Stage Acting” and “Camera Acting” on the board and asked the assembled students, “What makes a captivating performance on stage?” Numerous thoughts were contributed, and I wrote these down. I asked the same question of Camera Acting. Once again, numerous thoughts were offered. Together we noted the similarities. Both columns held “listening, playing the circumstances, authentic, truthful,

presence, embodied.” I then asked for the differences between the two styles. I specifically used the term “styles” here as I believe it is accessible to students trained fundamentally in theatre. The list included the camera, microphones, size of performance, volume, about the face instead of the body, non-linear vs linear. After reviewing the list together, I was able to announce with confidence that we would be addressing each one of the items listed in the course in some capacity. The students were released at 4:15 pm.

4.1.2 Week 1, Class 2, Wednesday, August 28, 2019

We again began the work promptly at 3 pm. I asked the students to leave their belongings and to step outside of the theatre doors. I suggested that when they each stepped through the door of the lobby and into the theatre space that they would be “crossing the threshold” from the ordinary into the extra-ordinary, from the pedestrian to the inspired, from the mundane into the divine (or whichever transformative analogy was appropriate for them). After entering, I asked each of them to find a space on the stage floor and to face me in silence. Once all of the students had crossed the threshold, I turned and faced in the same direction. I asked them to follow my movements and breath pattern as I introduced them to *Legato and Staccato*. This is a recognizable exercise from the Chekhov method in which the actors move with ease, stepping into each of the six directions (left, right, up, down, forward, and back) and lifting the arms into that direction imagining your energy flowing from your fingers far beyond your physical body (Chekhov, 2018). This exercise was to become a staple in our work in the course and inhabits many qualities essential to psychophysical acting (see Chapter 3, Section II) including tempo, variation, ease, flow, physical articulation, connection to breath, inner life, outer expression, and continuous acting.

The student actors became connected, focused, and curious. I asked them to hold onto these qualities as I introduced Chekhov's *Ball Toss*. We started in a circle and with a single ball. In this exercise, the actor with the ball finds a scene partner and non-verbally connects with that person. The actor then tosses the ball to their selected scene partner in a gentle, underhand toss. The actor works toward a body without any additional tension during this activity, connecting the movement to breath, and aims to allow the arm that releases the ball to be suspended in space, as they visualize energy flowing from it toward their scene partner. The actor focuses on continuity of the movement, from catching the ball, to bringing it into the backspace (the space behind the actor), to the toss and suspend. In the course, this exercise accomplished an awareness of physical articulation, non-verbal connection, continuous acting, ease, flow, and connection to breath. I also used this exercise to introduce the concept of *Radiation and Receiving*. We radiated toward our scene partner (the ball is tossed) and then received it (the ball is caught). This exercise was followed by a discussion. The actors responded to the act of "crossing the threshold" in a positive way, suggesting that they felt ready to learn once having stepped into the theatre. They also offered some insight as to why we might practice *Legato and Staccato*, sharing such phrases as "peaceful", "calming", "full body", and "centering." Regarding the *Ball Toss*, one student shared surprise that so much could be communicated non-verbally.

We wrapped up the day with each actor recording a 15-20 second introduction on camera. I suggested that each give their name, and something they might reveal on a third date. I thought that this prompt might raise the stakes and engage the nervous system, as each student would be revealing a small secret for the camera and the class. Liam, the T.A., set a mark on the ground and I offered an example of "hitting the mark." Each actor would enter the scene, hit the mark and give their introduction. It was noticeable that the ease, calm, and focus dissipated from the room very quickly once the camera was brought into the space with the intention of filming. We quickly

filmed the introductions, and, as our time together was coming to an end, I passed out sides ([Appendix E – I](#)) and rubrics ([Appendix D – I](#)) for an “Audition Assignment”. I had pulled material from a FOX pilot for a procedural drama that was casting called *Prodigal Son*. I pulled only four sides as I wanted the actors to see other interpretations of the role in class.

4.1.3 Week 2, Class 3, Wednesday, September 4, 2019

This class session was initially intended to be an exploration of Chekhov’s use of *Atmosphere* as well as a review of the previously recorded introductions. However, as I walked toward the class venue (the Stephen Foster Memorial Theatre), I noticed that there was a base camp setup for a major film or TV shoot right across the street, in Schenley Park. While I had allocated time in my calendar a bit later in the semester to discuss the logistics and navigation of key locations on a set as well as key players, I felt that the ability to physically visit a base camp and define the scene using the actual trailers and departments was too perfect to pass up. So, I “called an audible.” I hurried into the theatre to research what might be filming at this location. I deduced through an extras casting website that this might have been part of the as-yet-untitled Seth Rogen film shooting in Western Pennsylvania. I announced the “field trip” at the start of class and was met with much excitement. I framed the experience from the perspective of having booked a first on-screen job and what they might expect showing up for shooting. We started with getting dropped off from the passenger van, and worked through signing the contract, getting into wardrobe, finding craft services, and imagined our way all the way through “the works” (the hair and makeup trailer) and back onto the passenger van to be delivered to set. The actors had numerous questions and seemed quite delighted. We wrapped up the class back in the theatre, where I continued the lesson with an “On Set Intro Packet” ([Appendix C](#)) that described the

numerous crew positions on a set and how each relates to the actor, terms one might encounter, framing definitions, and a sample call sheet. The students left the session fulfilled and excited. While this deviation from scheduled work did interrupt my original plan, the reaction and response by the actors offered a positive take on the opportunity taken.

4.1.4 Week 3, Class 4, September 9, 2019

The class began with a revisit to *Legato and Staccato* exercise. For this session, I reminded them of the movements and elected to step outside of the exercise myself to observe and to offer side coaching. Many of my notes were designed to help students release any unnecessary tension in their bodies. I also focused specifically on the energetic implications of the exercise. I asked the actors to engage their *Concentration and Imagination* by imagining a ray of golden light flying out from their fingertips as they are engaged in the movement. I then asked students to imagine the color changing to purple and asked them to engage with how an image of purple light would feel in addition, and in comparison, to their imagination of the image of golden light. We then collectively discussed the effect of imagery on inner and outer expression.

Following this exercise, I led students through another exercise on *Personal Atmosphere* as devised by Anjalee Deshpande Hutchinson as outlined in her text, *Acting Exercises for Non-Traditional Staging* (Hutchinson, 2018). The exercise is called “Bubble” ([Appendix B - I](#)). Hutchinson writes about *Atmosphere*,

“When the tool is localized to one actor, it can be shorthand for actors’ physicality that always tells the story from the character’s viewpoint. Unrelated to mood or swaying emotional state, personal atmosphere creates the ‘mini-world’ of the character that is perceivable for the audience.”

The challenge for the actors in this exercise was playing the atmosphere instead of the mood that was offered. I explained that a mood or a feeling can be influenced by atmosphere, but it does not tell a whole and complete story of the character's point of view. While more time could have been used on this concept, we needed to move on to the viewing of the introductions filmed during Class 2.

As a group, we established our company guidelines for feedback. The group decided that it was important to discuss firstly what worked in the piece. An effective example might be, "when you were telling the bit about the shoplifting, you appeared to be really remembering it." The actors decided that it was important to frame feedback in a positive way. We thought that starting a note with "you might explore" or "the size of your expression really worked at the end; could the beginning be more at ease?" was the most effective. This protocol established boundaries for feedback sessions which empowered more responses from a variety of voices. Liam, our T.A., set up the monitor and played back the introductions we filmed in Class 2. We noted places of authentic qualities, honesty, ease, and play. Many students were critical of their images on screen. While viewing one's performance on camera may be unfamiliar, even for an student actor may be initially uncomfortable, it was important that students began to become accustomed to their images and voices on screen early in order to begin engaging in true and honest self-critique as soon as possible.

For the remaining 10 minutes, I asked the actors to find a reading partner for their audition. The partner would read the other roles, while the actor would work and rehearse their audition. I encouraged the actors to work with someone that they might not yet know. This challenge helped the students create trust and deepen the feeling of an ensemble.

4.1.5 Week 3, Class 5, September 11, 2019

To continue our research into *Atmosphere*, I coached an exercise from Hutchinson's text developed by Samantha Norton called "Tornado" ([Appendix B – II](#)). Norton describes the objective of the exercise: "[T]his complements Chekhov's concept of Personal Atmosphere with a touch of understanding what 'Radiating' can feel like...students will experience expansiveness in their breath, voice and movement—free of physical/psychological restriction." (Hutchinson, 2018) Following this exercise, I asked each actor to give a one or two-word description of the *Atmosphere* in their audition scene. This "naming" of the *Atmosphere* publicly gave the actors permission to explore their work in its context. I noticed an increase in risk and commitment in the rehearsals.

Liam, the T.A., and I filmed sections of roughly 45 seconds for each actor's rehearsal during the session. In the time remaining, we watched the short clips as a class. I focused the observation and feedback of this session by asking, "What *Atmosphere* do you observe, in one or two words?" Following the responses, I asked the actor who was on screen if that was the atmosphere they were intending to create. Most were quite happy with how their work was interpreted regarding the quality of their *Atmosphere*. Those whose work was not as clear were offered some thoughts on how they might continue to explore *Atmosphere*. These included suggestions that the students might write out what each "saw" in the scene, i.e. the weather noting humidity, storm clouds, etc., then physicalizing each one separately. I encouraged students to encounter how each piece of the *Atmosphere* might feel separately, and then to think about what would happen upon starting to combine these. Before the session ended, I reminded the actors that we would be holding "mock auditions" with their scenes at our following session.

4.2 Weeks 4 – 7: Viewing Audition Assignment, Scene Assignment, Archetypal Gesture, Blocking and Marks, Adjusting for Camera

4.2.1 Week 4, Class 6, Monday, September 16, 2019

Upon the start of class, I could sense that there was some excess energy in the group due to anxiety or nerves related to their upcoming auditions. I recalled an exercise that was led by Sol Garre during my own first week of training at the Michael Chekhov Association at Connecticut College the previous summer, which I decided to share. My objective was to offer an exercise that might release some of the anxiety through movement, then transition into a physical articulation and awareness practice. Unaware of an existing name for this exercise, I called it “Fire into Clay.” I selected music to use during the exercise from the band *The Polyphonic Spree*, as it is uplifting, simple, and mostly instrumental. I asked the actors to find a space on the floor in a standing position, and then to visualize the blazing core of the Earth and to start to channel that heat energy up from the core and into their bodies. I asked them to embody the image of fire and consuming heat starting slowly like a kettle rising up from their feet into their fingers. Gradually, I encouraged the image to become hotter, more powerful, expansive as it filled their bodies and informed their movement. I offered that perhaps this energy would take them into motion through the room while holding the image of a consuming ball of fire. “How does this image move through the voice?” I asked. Many responded with vocalizations. I then asked, “How does this image effect your interactions with others in the space?” The actors began to take in one another, allowing others to influence their presence. They were *Radiating and Receiving*. This played on for about four minutes. I then asked them to imagine the heat and energy to start to retreat back into the core; however, all of the knowledge of that experiment remained with us. The sense of physical freedom,

expansion, and *Radiating and Receiving* was now theirs to hold and use. As the energy retreated, I asked them to visualize their bodies becoming a clay-like substance, moldable but dense. They were to remain in motion, but to allow the change in imagery to influence their body's expression. I asked them to find a tempo that was glacial in tempo as if the movement could barely be perceived. My side coaching included prompts such as, "Keep all of the desire to move that you had in the first experiment," "Let the top of your head or the tip of your finger continue to tell the story," and "The story is continuous." We were finding some stunningly rich, full-bodied expressions from this experiment. The energy had focused, and we were ready to film.

Liam had previously placed marks on the floor where the actors were to stand, slate, and execute their auditions. I asked the actors to step outside and sign up on the sheet and indicated that we would film in that order. Those who went near the top of the order were rewarded with the opportunity to observe their scene partner's work. As I was collecting the sign-in sheet from the lobby, I reminded the actors of techniques that we now knew well; atmosphere, physical articulation, and tempo. We filmed the auditions in order and finished with a minute to spare. The subsequent session was dedicated to viewing those auditions and deriving feedback.

4.2.2 Week 4, Class 7, Wednesday, September 18, 2019

The session began promptly at 3 pm, and we shifted directly from announcements into our viewing setting. My intention for this session was to view all of the auditions, giving time for self-reflection, peer-feedback, and instructor feedback. I elected to forgo any warm-ups, as time was limited. Liam set up the monitor for viewing and was able to pause, fast-forward, and rewind as needed. I asked the actors for prompts for the self-reflection. We decided that self-reflection should include: "What did you love about your work?" "What was the most believable moment?" and

“What would you do differently on another run, specifically?” The peer-feedback remained the same as previously established (see [Week 3, Class 4](#)). The actors spoke in terms of atmosphere, specificity of movement, connection to emotion and body; and the peer feedback was extremely productive! The students displayed a confidence in the terms and an appreciation for how the technique could be observed in the scene as well as in the actor's body. This feedback session further solidified our common language that could be used for the rest of the term as a group. My feedback portion was used to highlight camera techniques that were working within performances such as stillness, focus, volume, facial tension, and for nearly everyone, time. I found that in general, moments were rushed, discoveries were missed, thoughts weren't fully formed and therefore not connected to the body or voice. This discovery was key, as it would directly impact the scenes that I selected for the next assignment. Class wrapped up and I enthusiastically congratulated and thanked the actors for their risk, commitment, and thoughtfulness.

4.2.3 Week 5, Class 8, Monday, September 23, 2019

After noticing the need for tempo awareness (see previous class entry), I “called an audible” and revisited my scene selections for the second assignment. My initial plan was to pull sides from TV shows that were filming or had recently been filmed in the Pittsburgh area as a way to familiarize the actors with work casting in the region. However, after speaking over the weekend to a colleague who coaches actors regularly in L.A., I decided that I should try a shift in the style of show for the second assignment; an inherently more intentional genre, slower paced, yet maintaining high and interpretable stakes as that of the Soap Opera. I pulled scenes from an episode of *Days of Our Lives* and cast roughly half of the class in this scene. The other half of the ensemble were cast in the Romantic Comedy feature film, *Notting Hill*. Again, this decision was made with

pacing, stakes, and clear intentions in mind (sides are available in [Appendix E – II](#), rubric in [Appendix D - II](#)).

We began the session by revisiting *Legato and Staccato*. I prompted the actors to connect movement to breath and find articulation and awareness in their whole bodies. After this warm-up, we moved into a physical study of Archetypal Characters (AC). For this, I employed Lenard Petit, Exercise 15 (Petit, 2020, p. 70). The actors were asked to follow their impulses when imagining and embodying different AC's. They were asked to find themselves in a place of stillness and concentration and allow images to pass through their consciousness when an AC was said aloud. They were encouraged to move through the space once they embodied the different ACs. I coached with prompts including, “Let the AC influence your voice” and “Allow the image to affect your relationship to space and others in space.” A few selections of ACs that were prompted included the queen, the fool, the warrior, the victim, and the hero. I asked the students to reflect upon how each AC might influence how we feel about ourselves and our place in the world. Then I said, “Drop it and let it go, moving as yourself knowing what we now know about that AC. But, notice how we don’t have to take the character with us. We simply take it off or step out of it.”

I asked Liam, the T.A., to make a two-scene visual presentation in the genres of scenes I selected for the second assignment (Soap Opera and Romantic Comedy, respectively). He presented a scene from *All My Children* and another from *27 Dresses*. I asked if the actors could recognize the archetypes that were being presented in each scene, and they did. This affirmed that we might use Archetypal Characters as a way toward understanding our own characters.

Following the presentation and feedback session, I presented the actors with their scenes and scene partners. I asked them to use the remaining time to read the scenes, privately at first, and to write down any images that might bubble up as they read, especially noting any images that might pertain to *Atmosphere* and *Archetype*. Once they had a collection of images, they could then

engage with their scene partners and share contact information so they could create schedules for off-site rehearsals before rehearsing these scenes with the camera during the following session.

4.2.4 Week 5, Class 9, Wednesday, September 25, 2019

For the in-class rehearsals, I split the class into four sections of four, giving us roughly 15 minutes per scene. Our objective was to first observe the scene that had been rehearsed, to run through it once more to place marks for the actors, and then to run it a third time for a camera rehearsal. Liam and I “called an audible” on this plan; at the first run through Liam was able to find and place his marks for camera in order to save time. This gave me more time to discuss performance and technique with the actors. Additionally, we recorded sections of the rehearsals and uploaded them to a course box so that the actors could see how their techniques were translating on camera. I wanted to give the actors as much exposure to their own work as possible. Moreover, this regular recording and access provided a record of their progress and growth in the style and method as the course moved forward.

As we were working in a theatre, many of the actors in Group 1 were still “presenting” their work for the imaginary theatre audience by cheating out and pushing their volume. As volume goes, so went the body. That is to say that there appeared to be a direct correlation between the volume and the size of the expression of the body. Most of our shots for this assignment were a medium close shot, in which the bottom of the shot is at the waist and the top of the shot is an inch or two above the head. This allowed for expressive arms and gestures and was rather forgiving if the face was active. This medium-close framing was intentional, as we would be punching in closer for the next assignment focusing on a wide close-up just below the tops of the shoulders. One student suggested that, to avoid the temptation of a one-directional stage performance, the other

actors surround the working actors so that their “audience” would be in 360 degrees. We did and it worked! The actors started to work in 360 degrees instead of playing to the “theater audience”.

During rehearsals, we were effectively able to address moments where the actors needed to make adjustments for camera. For example, if a character was rising up from a chair in their scene they would have to slow the movement down so that the camera movement would be smooth and easy. The actors did share that they felt unnatural with such adjustments, initially. However, when they viewed the on-camera rehearsal in playback, they also agreed that it looked “right” on screen.

Throughout rehearsals, we were able to discuss the techniques of *Atmosphere*, *Archetype*, *Ease*, and *Radiate and Receive*. Most importantly, we were able to reflect on the importance of taking time to *Receive*, allowing the next thought or image to be born and expand such that this moment of intention could translate to *Ease* and be tempo-appropriate for their camera work. This reflective reminder was helpful for students and apparently enabled a consciousness of the technique for achieving appropriate pacing on-camera.

4.2.5 Week 6, Class 10, Monday, September 30, 2019

In this session, I offered music and five minutes for the actors to warm-up on their own time, which was centered on Group 2 rehearsals. Much of the work was focused on the themes noted in Section D above; however, I did additionally find that Liam and I were becoming more efficient at discovering our camera movement which continued to free precious minutes with each group for rehearsals.

4.2.6 Week 6, Class 11, Wednesday, October 2, 2019

The session, with Group 3 in rehearsal, began with a five-minute warm-up open to the actors as they wished. They appeared to be understanding and incorporating the idea of pacing and allowing time to *Radiate and Receive*. I would shine a light on these moments by recalling them after a run-through. The actors agreed that this review was helpful.

4.2.7 Week 7, Class 12, Monday, October 7, 2019

The actors were more energetic than usual and a little unfocused. I suggested that we use our five minutes to revisit the *Legato and Staccato* exercise. A difference this time is that I also played music and asked the actors to move in unison. I asked them to find the *Beauty* in their movement. I shared that *Beauty* was one of Chekhov's *Four Brothers* and that he considered it to be integral to a full and inspired performance. Here, I named the *Four Brothers: Beauty, Ease, Form* and the *Whole*. I asked the actors to consider these on our second round through *Legato and Staccato*. The actors became grounded, connected, and concentrated.

I asked them to share how they perceived that the *Four Brothers* could be useful as we work for the camera. Several noted that *Ease* was needed so that you could *Receive* the work coming from the other actor, or *Atmosphere*. One student noted that *Form* was essential so that you knew what your body was doing in the frame. I further described the *Whole* as the idea that the entire body is contributing to the story in continuous action. Importantly, there was a question about *Beauty* and whether this related to physical beauty of the performer or the intellectual beauty of the work. I clarified that Chekhov's intention was that the actor seeks *Beauty*, and that for our purposes we could consider *Beauty* to be vulnerability, allowing thoughts, images, feelings, to be

seen by the camera as we work. We collectively agreed that this could work for us. Group 4's rehearsal concluded, and we celebrated. Filming began on our next meeting.

4.3 Weeks 7.5 – 12: Filming Two-Person Scenes, “Your Actor” Scene Assignment, Veiling, Psychological Gesture, Filming “Your Actor” Scenes

4.3.1 Week 7, Class 13, Wednesday, October 9, 2019

As usual, there was much to fit in our 75-minute session. My goal was to first rehearse each scene for marks and then to film two takes of each scene. Each take would be dedicated to a single actor as the focus of the two-person scene. In order to expedite the process, I requested volunteers for the following crew positions; Set Team (two people), First Assistant Camera (one person), and Second Assistant Camera (two people). The roles of the Set Team were to quickly remove the previous scene's set pieces and switch these with the set of the incoming actors. The actors who were playing in the upcoming scene would offer direction for set piece placement and orientation. This process appeared to offer a sense of permission for the incoming actors to take the space in addition to expediting the flow of rehearsal and filming for each scene. It was a way for the previous scene's work to be cleared physically as well as metaphysically. The First Assistant Camera person's role was to guide Liam (in this context, also our Camera Operator and Director of Photography) toward the camera marks that were established in the rehearsal so that he was in the strongest position to capture the work of the actors on camera. The two Second Assistant Camera positions were to set marks during the rehearsal takes for the actors in the scene.

This required focus and efficiency from all teams if we were to “make our day,” as they say in film and television.

The filming process was fast. Actors were meant to double-task acting as their own set advisors offering direction to the set teams, preparing their props, if needed, and eventually acting in their scenes. While in general, the actors would not be tasked with crew obligations on a professional set, this atmosphere of constant change, controlled chaos, and the perhaps sad but realistic placing of the actor’s needs very low on their list of priorities would be accurate from the perspective of a traditional shoot. As such, this workflow represented valuable exposure for the actors. I additionally reminded the actors to recall and utilize the techniques and to revisit their work on *Atmosphere*, *Archetypal Gesture*, *Tempo*, and *Radiating and Receiving* during any and all moments they might have for themselves before filming.

Filming was, with minutes to spare, completed during our 75 minutes. During the filming, Liam saw two moments that he believed would play more powerfully in a two-shot instead of our established medium-close shots. Liam was inspired by the physical touch choreographed in the scene. There was a slow tempo reach from one actor to the other's cheek in contrast to the aggressive language in the scene. The actor's choice to play the opposite of the overt tones in the language inspired Liam and the other viewers. After a pause, I enthusiastically agreed and gave the direction of the two-shots over to Liam. While we were pressed for time, I believed that this action of real-time adjustments and changes of the filming sequence was true to industry practice. Additionally, I appreciated and wanted to encourage Liam’s vision and give him practice communicating his vision to the actors. This moment served the students, the T.A., and the class as a whole by allowing the ensemble to experience in-the-moment technical adjustment in order to facilitate capture of a powerful performance. I believe in general, and saw in this instance, that

flexibility in instruction to realize of moments of inspiration served the course much better than rigid adherence to the lesson plan and timing.

As we were wrapping up for the day, I brought up an idea to swap our scheduled “Ensemble Scene” assignment for something else entirely. I had been slowly coming to the realization that we were simply too restricted (with only 2.5 hours per week of allocated time together) to fully realize and film the ensemble scenes that I had visualized and initially prepared for. My alternate proposition was an assignment called “Your Artist” (rubric in [Appendix D – III](#)). I pitched it as an opportunity to study an actor who was similar to their type, or an actor whose work they admired and wished to explore. The vote was unanimously in favor of the “Your Artist” assignment in place of the “Ensemble Scene” as originally planned. They were to send me their actor, scene selection, and rationale for their choice before we met again on Monday.

4.3.2 Week 8, Class 14, Monday, October 14, 2019

In addition to viewing the recorded scene work with students, I wanted to start exploring the idea of *Veiling* with them. *Veiling* is the idea that the character generally has to play the feelings or images that they have through a veil of behavior that they believe will not expose their truth. In bringing this idea to the students, I asked them if they had ever engaged in *Veiling* their truths. They agreed that they did so, and regularly. I admitted and explained that in that exact moment, I was *Veiling* for them as well. I was wearing a veil of pedagogical performance and acceptable instructor behavior. We discussed the benefit of recognizing and exploring this concept. The students offered that the work of the actor might become more complicated, authentic, honest, and more *Whole*. I did not attempt to veil my excitement when I asked them to join me on the floor for an exercise. For the next 10 minutes, we worked through Hutchinson’s Exercise 5.9 “Inner/Outer

Friction” (which can be found in [Appendix B](#)). The actors were engaged and readily described the work they were exploring as complex, present, and incorporating friction.

We then began to view the scenes filmed in our previous session. We engaged in the same feedback practice established in earlier sessions (see [Week 3, Class 4](#) and [Week 4, Class 7](#)). There was much delight in seeing the “Liam Special Shots” and in general, I found the work to be more physically aware and articulate as well as vocally appropriate and they agreed that the time taken to *Radiate and Receive* had translated beautifully to the screen.

4.3.3 Week 8, Class 15, Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Our warm-up and exploration for this class was a revisit of the *Archetypal Character* exercise that we practiced on September 23rd in Class 8. I asked them to consider the character they had elected to investigate for their “Your Artist” scene in this exercise. Once the actors began to move and interact within their chosen Assistant Camera (as outlined in Class 8), I asked them to consider a whole-body gesture that might hold the essence of the entire character in one movement. Most of the gestures started simply, only engaging an arm or the neck and head. “Keep exploring the whole body with this,” I suggested, and further added, “How can your head and neck movement become whole-bodied?” I reminded them that this should be a joyful exploration that could take away the pressure to be “right.” I again noted that the exercise could facilitate exploration and play with a sense of *Ease* and freedom connected to *Form* and awareness. While the complexity of my request was not lost on me, I did observe some actors engaging physically in more articulate and whole-bodied ways than I had seen previously. This served as an excellent introduction to our *Psychological Gesture* exploration that would begin in the next session.

During our remaining time, we viewed and offered feedback on the owed scenes from the previous session. We again followed the agreed upon feedback prompts and methods. The students were becoming clearer and more specific with their observations and feedback to one another as they related to both Chekhov methodology and camera techniques.

4.3.4 Week 9, Class 16, Monday, October 21, 2019

The beginning of this session was dedicated to the exploration of *Archetypal Gesture* as introduced by Michael Chekhov in his text *To the Actor* and later expanded upon by Joanna Merlin. *Archetypal Gestures* (AG) are movements that are widely recognizable across cultural and temporal spaces. The AG as recognized today by the Michael Chekhov Association (MICHA) are Push, Pull, Throw, Drag, Smash, Lift, Gather, Tear, Penetrate, Reach, Expand, Contract, and Wring. I asked my student actors to find the full body gesture that embodies each AG and reminded them that this was an experiment so they should work from a place of non-judgment. I asked that the gesture should adhere to the guidelines of Chekhov's Four Brothers (*Beauty, Ease, Form* and the *Whole*, as covered in Class 12). They should have a clear beginning, middle, and ending. They might think of these as a preparation for the action, the action and the aftermath or sustain. The gestures should have *Form* or a full-body awareness and activity. There should be a feeling of *Ease* around the work, only engaging tension that is absolutely necessary to complete the AG. Finally, it should be having a sense of *Beauty* or inspiration. We were ultimately able to explore 6 of 13 AG, Push, Pull, Expand, Contract, Tear and Penetrate.

The rest of the period was allocated to encounter the scenes that had been selected. Each actor told the group the artist they had chosen, which character and scene they had selected, and their rationale for selection followed by a reading of the scene with a reader of their choice playing

the other character(s) in the scene. We finished the day by signing up for our rehearsal and performance order. Our goal was to rehearse five scenes on Day 1, six on Day 2, and five on Day 3.

4.3.5 Week 9, Class 17, Wednesday, October 23, 2019

At the top of the session, we explored the AGs remaining from the previous class. As the actors now understood the exercise, we were able to move a bit more quickly through this session. At the end of the AG exploration, I asked them to consider what AG would align most closely with their character in the scene they had selected and encouraged them to explore this alignment physically. Once they seemed to find an AG that was working, I asked them to give it a quality, meaning to engage the gesture with a quality attached to it. I offered some examples of qualities that could be employed, i.e., cold, hot, dry, hollow, grieving, arrogant, heroic. The AGs began to take on some stunning complexities. I then asked the actors to create a *Psychological Gesture* (PG) for their character before our next session, with the instruction that the gesture should express the thoughts, will and feelings of the character. I suggested that the work we just accomplished might be a perfect springboard into the PG. We would show this work to our group at the beginning of the next session.

4.3.6 Week 10, Class 18, Monday, October 28, 2019

We moved into rehearsals of the “Your Artist” scenes with Group 1. To be clear, these scenes were not meant to be exact reproductions of original work. The actors were meant to create their own interpretation of the character, finding inspiration from the original work as a starting

point for their character investigation. During rehearsals, we explored blocking, the actors gave notes to camera on how they wanted to be framed and gave suggestions for camera movement taking ownership over their work and the scene. I believe that, by understanding more of the elements of production that surround an actor's work, the students will have less anxiety and feel more empowered on set in a professional environment. Thus, we additionally offered the opportunity to those interested in operating the camera with Liam's guidance.

I offered the students five minutes to warm up on their own, after which they would present their PGs. We created a circle and they were told to step in, one at a time in no particular order, to present their creation. The presentation of the PGs turned out to be one of my favorite sessions as I found this work to be the most revealing of their comprehension and application of the Chekhov techniques explored in this course. One student stepped forward, as though he were moving through clay. He appeared heavy, troubled, burdened as his gaze couldn't rise to even meet the horizon. His arms began to lift; heavily, but with an inspired intention, as if there was a fire beginning to burn from within them. Once his arms reached shoulder level, the actor's fingers gripped at the force in front of and all around them and, with tremendous specificity and in a slow, controlled tempo, the actor tore this force; tore a hole in it. As the actor passed through this doorway it was as if he were bathed in a warm, golden light. His gaze lifted, he appeared to be almost floating, his arms floated down to his sides and he stood full, upright, and ready. It was a whole story told through gesture; a story of bondage and containment, personal struggle, and relief and peace achieved that we all know and can instantly connect to. In summary, the most captivating PGs existed in an *Atmosphere*, worked from a body at *Ease*, which took time for the beginning, middle and end, and engaged the entire body.

Group 2 rehearsed their "Your Artist" scenes following our collective PG presentation. We followed the same format and offered the same opportunity for actors to participate as camera

operators. Due to time constraints, we were only able to rehearse five of the six scenes before the end of the session.

4.3.7 Week 10, Class 19, Wednesday, October 30, 2019

After the five-minute opening warm-up, I asked the actors to revisit their PGs in space. I played selections of music by *Avro Part* while they worked. Their work appeared a bit rehearsed in my evaluation. I asked them to consider if perhaps their PG had developed and changed since the last time they had worked with them, and asked, “What if the PGs are fluid? How might the PG be different today, as our relationship to ourselves and our character has inevitably changed since our last class?” The PGs then started to look and feel more alive, and more truthful almost instantly. We collected in a circle and I then asked how they might use their PGs in their scene work. It was suggested that they might be used right before filming as a way to connect again to the character. Another suggestion was that a version of the gesture could be placed within scene. I agreed that both were perfect applications of this technique for our purposes.

As we had six scenes to work through, we began the work immediately following our talkback session. The same opportunities for actively assuming crew roles were offered as in the previous rehearsal sessions. We were able to rehearse all six scenes before the end of the session. As we concluded, I reminded the students that we would begin filming the scenes during the next session. I shared with them that I wanted to film at least two versions of the scene, one version in a medium-close shot, and the second version in a medium close-up (see Framing Guide in Appendix B). While this would require more time, I thought it integral to both the course and to actor preparation for bookings in film and television that they learn how to navigate and modify

their work for a close-up shot. We would attempt to film in the same order as our rehearsal schedule, with five filming sessions on Day 1, six on Day 2, and five on Day 3.

4.3.8 Week 11, Class 20, Monday, November 4, 2019

Five minutes of free warm-up time was offered at the beginning of the session. Following this, I offered another five minutes for the actors who were filming this session (Day 1 for “Your Artist” scenes) to connect with their readers and rehearse or address any changes. We called for volunteers to run as crew as before. Again, we needed a Set Team of two and three Assistant Camera people. Liam would run the camera for all of the scenes in this case, for efficiency. We were ultimately able to film four of the five scenes scheduled for the day. As I was determined to film moments in both the medium-close shot and the medium close-up that would inspire the actors, in some cases, this required more than two takes of the scene in that particular set up and thus some extra time was spent compared to my schedule.

4.3.9 Week 11, Class 21, Wednesday, November 6, 2019

I offered ten minutes total for warm up, check-in, and rehearsal. On Day 2 of filming for the “Your Artist” scenes, we were able to move more swiftly and complete the filming of all six scenes. However, I decided that I would offer private, direct feedback via email instead of holding class time for my instructor feedback. The takes would additionally be posted for the entire class to watch, and I encouraged them to do so. I did not require students to write feedback for the other actors in the class. While another option was to cut or sharply decrease the time allocated for our

Commercial Audition section, I was not comfortable excluding that key training from our course and was satisfied by the solution that was reached via the use of online tools.

4.3.10 Week 12, Class 22, Monday, November 11, 2019

This session operated in the same manner as the previous two (Classes 20 and 21). At the end of the Class 22, I informed the actors that our following session would be dedicated to our transition to work on Commercial Auditions.

4.4 Weeks 12.5 – 14: Commercial Audition vs. Film/TV, Cold Reading Exercise, Research Techniques, Using Images and Qualities, Commercial Audition Assignment

4.4.1 Week 12, Class 23, Wednesday, November 13, 2019

Four hours before class began, I sent an email to all of the students to let them know that they were selected for an “audition” during our class session for a national commercial and that the sides were available in our online course folder (see [Appendix E](#) - III). While unorthodox for a traditional university actor training course, this short-notice appointment is a common practice in broader markets and was designed to replicate what actors would experience in Los Angeles or New York City. My objective was to offer an experience that was as close as possible to a “same day” appointment for a commercial casting session. I indicated in the email that specific instructions would be given immediately at 3 pm at the start of class that day, and that I would offer no “warm-up” time. I further explained in the email that I selected copy from a McDonald’s

commercial, and I sent instructions on the qualities and tone that the casting team was seeking for the piece.

At the start of class, I explained how the day would run. Actors would move into the lobby outside of the venue. Each would sign in for their time slot voluntarily. All actors would be invited into the space for the group explanation of the expectations. They would then be excused, and actors would subsequently be invited in one-by-one for auditions. I informed them that after their audition, they were to observe the other auditions and act as the “client” in the room along with myself, playing the role of Casting Director.

The group explanation covered the tone and qualities that casting was seeking authentic, real, honest, and “no acting.” After they showed their hands to the camera, they were told that they could sit or stand. They were told that the client might give direction and ask to see the work again, or they may not. They were told that the client might also ask them questions.

I called in the first actor to audition as Liam was already set up to record. After the slate, I asked him to begin when he was ready. I offered a direction and asked him to run it again. I then asked him if he was comfortable eating beef. The actor confirmed that he was. I asked if he had ever eaten for a commercial spot. The actor said that he had not. Finally, I asked what his favorite item at McDonald’s was. Afterward, I asked the actor to let the next actor in and take a seat with me and act as the client suggesting that he could contribute by asking a question or two after the re-direction. This process continued until each actor was seen.

The recording and casting session required the entire class period. Liam filmed all of the work that day. He noted that the takes would be uploaded before the end of the day. I asked the actors to watch everyone’s work before arriving for our next class.

4.4.2 Week 13, Class 24, Monday, November 18, 2019

In this session, we broadly discussed the differences between commercial, film, and television auditions. We also explored how to prepare for a commercial audition efficiently. Then, we discussed and watched examples from the “auditions” filmed in the previous session.

Initially, there were questions about the short notice for the appointment and whether that was accurate for the industry. I explained that in my experience, in smaller markets such as Pittsburgh, more notice is given for appointments in general. However, I further clarified that it is not at all unusual for someone to receive a same-day appointment request in Los Angeles, for example.

I asked what the actors did to prepare for the audition. The overwhelming response was associated with the memorization of the material. "Did anyone read it and write down images that were brought up?" No one had. "Did anyone pull up recent McDonald's spots online to get a feel for tone or quality?" No. I suggested that these noted options might represent an effective use of time, technique, and resources moving forward. I also asked the actors what they were selling in the McDonald's spot. It was agreed that they were selling hamburgers. I suggested, alternately, that ads rarely are selling the product. Instead, they are selling the feeling or image you receive when you purchase that product. I asked them to now reconsider what they were selling and to toss out images and feelings that came up for them. This partial list included inclusiveness, community, joy, delight, completeness, desire, and commitment. I asked whether they would have reframed the approach to their preparation and execution if they had instead been working from this list, and there was a general affirmative response. This exercise underscored the learning around how to incorporate qualities into their work effectively. Moving forward, I encouraged them to consider

the approach of defining imagery and qualities (*Imagination and Concentration*) when preparing for another appointment.

I asked how they interpreted the “no acting” note from casting in the audition notice. They suggested that this note meant that casting desired naturalistic performances. I agreed, and added that in general, they would cast the person who already looks, feels, speaks, and moves like the archetype they are seeking. I was able to offer some interpretations based on my own experience: ad agencies (the client) have limited imagination when it comes to casting and they generally don’t cast outside of the scripted character archetype. So, in essence, they are casting the person not the actor. They are casting all of the qualities that the person already has as opposed to the qualities they can create or act. An alternate way of phrasing this would be that casting, in this context, is looking to see if we can reveal our authentic selves. When casting, our client asks us questions in the room; the reason is two-fold. Our client will ask us anything that pertains to the shoot, but they will also ask questions to see if we “act” like the same person who just performed the copy for the audition or callback. If yes, then they trust that the work we delivered was very close to the qualities of our authentic self.

We concluded the class with Liam showing the work of one of the auditions from the previous session. We collectively noted how the actor was successful. They appeared at *Ease*, natural, within the style, honest, and neither their voice nor body changed during the question section. They were the same person from slate to exit. As clients, we felt like we knew the qualities of this person after their audition and were confident that the same person would show up if we booked them for the job.

4.4.3 Week 13, Class 25, Wednesday, November 20, 2019

We started the session revisiting *Legato and Staccato* to music and working toward group movement in unison. My objective for this session was to work on our slating and explore the quality of *Ease* as we answer questions from casting. The class collectively created two lines of copy for a cleaning product. We discussed and decided that the commercial was selling confidence, control, ease, family, happiness, and freedom. I suggested that these qualities might be worth bringing into their slates and their responses to any questions from casting. As this session was directed at exploration and less of a formal audition study, I suggested that the actors move through the exercise on a volunteer and first-come basis. We noticed that several actors were still changing their voice and physical presence as they transitioned from the audition material into the questions. I suggested that they use Chekhov's *Pause* after they completed the audition section to remind themselves of the qualities they wished to embody. The application of the *Pause* appeared to greatly benefit the actors' performances, as they were able to respond more confidently and with a sense of *Ease*. Before we wrapped up, I reminded the actors that we would be filming our commercial audition assignment during the next class. I told them that the piece would require specific physical movement, gestures, and blocking that would be explained in group discussion prior, and that they were expected to have earlier copy (see [Appendix E](#) – IV) and notes, available in our online folder, memorized.

4.4.4 Week 14, Class 26, Monday, December 2, 2019

I emailed the actors in advance of class to ask them to sign up for a slot on the provided sign-in sheet in the theater lobby and to then hold briefly there. While the actors waited, I

introduced Liam to the different marks that the actors were going to hit to deliver their lines. The physical direction was to be extremely specific, including gestures, multiple marks, interaction with props, and delivery straight into the camera (see [Appendix D](#) - IV). At 3:01 pm, I then asked the actors to enter the group explanation. I went through the entire piece, offering the specific direction that was required for the audition. I asked if there were any questions, and one actor asked if I could explain the direction again. I went through the piece once more with the direction. Once more, I asked if anyone had any questions. There were no questions. The actors were then asked to make their way back to the lobby and would be invited back, in order.

At 3:15 pm, we started with the audition section. Each actor was given two runs of the piece with a “quality” direction offered on the second run. An example of a quality direction would be, “Try it this time as if you were sharing the greatest secret to success.” The actors who were most successful with this assignment had memorized well, had taken notes during the group explanation, had researched the company for which we were auditioning, and enjoyed moments within the piece. We ended our day just a few minutes behind schedule. Liam promised to upload the takes by the end of the day so they could be viewed by students prior to the start of the next class. Then I shared that our next and final meeting would begin with a discussion about the commercial audition assignment.

4.4.5 Week 14, Class 27, Wednesday, December 4, 2019

The session began with a discussion of the commercial audition as planned, as the actors were meant to have seen their own audition at minimum prior to class. I started with the question, “Did you do what you set out to do?” and found that the response was mixed. Many admitted that their preparation was not adequate and did not serve them during the audition. However, there

were also actors who felt that they presented what they had intended. I asked how they prepared, and they shared that they studied the lines, wrote out the qualities the ad was selling, played the lines with numerous different qualities in their preparation time, researched the company and its advertising history, and additionally were focused on enjoying the process. I asked Liam to play a specific actor's audition who had executed excellently, and we watched it as a group. The actors cited that they observed ease, confidence, and joy in the work. They also noted that the actor's qualities from slate to exit remained consistent. We agreed that we would have called this person back.

This assessment led us to a series of questions about callbacks and expectations regarding that process. As this was our last meeting together, and I recommend that any future instructor take the time to fully acknowledge the students' energy and efforts, I wrapped the session up by thanking the actors for their commitment, willingness, positivity, and rigor. I admitted that I couldn't imagine this course with any other group of folks.

5.0 Literature Review

In the literature, there is a clear avenue toward the development of a Chekhovian method for actors in film and television. In this review, I identify first the need shown in the literature for a Chekhovian method in distinction from the American approach. The review proceeds to show that the foundational elements of such a method exist and the degree to which it is possible as other scholars have made inroads for television and film actors. My concluding analysis considers what questions arise from the review and creates an opportunity for exploring how Chekhovian technique functions in acting pedagogy, which I examine in my undergraduate *Acting for Camera* course. In short, while Chekhov's work *can* be of service to the film and television actor, no one has yet made that leap directly. Despite this gap, the “interpretive” content of many sources presents an opportunity and framework for exploring Chekhov’s work in relation to film and TV.

5.1 Resisting the American Method

In *Lessons for the Professional Actor*, Chekhov offers 14 lectures to working professionals familiar with his principles and method. This is a nice complement to his *On the Technique of Acting*. It offers a unique glimpse into Chekov’s “voice,” and is often cited in the literature. He sets up the work by commenting on what he believes is a dire need for his approach, which utilizes concentration and imagination as primary foundations. He believes and argues that the obsession with the American Method toward verisimilitude takes the “spirit of the creative process away from the actor by making the actors intellectual investigators instead of creative explorers.”

(Chekhov, 1991) He cites his own experience attending theatre and working with trained actors as evidence to a theatre that no longer places the actor as the central and most important creative force in the process of theatre-making. And along these lines, Ashperger's *The Rhythm of Space and the Sound of Time* examines how and why the seeming resurgence of Michael Chekhov's method is happening, as evidenced by upticks in academic engagement via literature as well as in coaching settings. (Ashperger, 2008) She begins with the history of the philosophies that influenced Chekhov, being Hinduism and Anthroposophy, and traces the lineage to the current practitioners and their methods of pedagogy. Having been an American Method actor before coming to the Chekhov technique, this signals a notable departure from her roots toward a future of theatre (and perhaps television and film) that is much more Chekhovian. Petit makes a similar move (Petit, 2020).

Alongside the relatively recent resurgence of the Chekhovian method against the backdrop of an "American" landscape, there is significant precedent in the literature for serious academic consideration of Michael Chekhov for new and exciting developments in instruction. In particular, Mathieu and Yana offer a deeply academic view into the current interpretations of Chekhov's work and influence. (Mathieu and Yana, 2015) It is the most academically situated text of my selections, and in my thesis this source offers insight into the application of the Chekhov method across disciplines, sensitivities, and sensibilities. Despite the broad value offered, still no attempt is made therein to extend the Chekhovian techniques into the domain of the television and film actor.

5.2 Foundations for Television and Film

Chekhov, while placing the actor in the center of the creative process of theatre making, never mentions the placement of the actor in filmmaking. Even though film and television are not mentioned in his *Lessons for the Professional Actor*, the principles and exercises that he mentions in the text can feasibly be translated to the film actor. Specifically, it is possible to engage Chekhov's exploration of *Atmosphere, Radiating and Receiving, Imagination and Concentration*, and the use of the *Psychological Gesture* for training in film and theater. In addition, *On the Technique of Acting* offers a key scaffolding upon which a method for television and film might be adapted. Ashperger offers the clearest approach and examples of how a practitioner might integrate their own philosophy and techniques with the Chekhov method. While the author twice mentions that she utilizes the Chekhov method for her work in film and television, both on set and in auditions, she chooses not to share explicit details of this incorporation in her writing. Indeed, neither Chekhov himself nor Ashperger make quite the same inroads as Hutchinson, as discussed below.

Hutchinson sets up a guide for utilizing Chekhov's methods for creating work in non-traditional staging that they describe as any theatre space that is not a proscenium and uses several of Chekhov's exercises in their "pure" form. (Hutchinson, 2018) Hutchinson believes that Chekhov's method is the most efficient method for giving the actor tools with which an audience in a 360-degree scope can interpret them. While Hutchinson does discuss 360 degree acting (allowing and accepting audience interpretation from any angle) which could quickly be adapted for thinking about acting for camera in that on some occasions several cameras may be filming from different locations simultaneously, she never makes that leap. I would enthusiastically suggest that Hutchinson's insight could be used to innovate in this space in combination with

Lenard Petit's *The Michael Chekhov Handbook*, which breaks down the approach to the Chekhov method. While this text also does not address film or television work in a direct way, perhaps the most enlightening aspect of the text is the observation of how Petit seems to take ownership over the method and creates his version of the method around the work he finds most engaging. This is promising for adapting and creating exercises that are specifically in service to the actor on set. This is reflected in Chekhov's understanding of his own method in *Michael Chekhov's Lessons for Teachers*, in which the most significant section reveals the permissiveness with which Chekhov allowed artists to personally interpret his work. They could take what they needed to build their own style, technique, and method. He argues that what he offers is only his best attempt at a technique that would give the power of creation back to the actor (including in film and television, perhaps). This might be, in part, a result of that Chekhov's technique is *psycho-physical* and does not require a purely psychological approach to character. Using his techniques on set offers emotional and psychological freedom for the actor.

5.3 Future of a Theatrical Method as Applied to Film and Television

As the title suggests, Merlin wrote *Auditioning: An Actor-Friendly Guide* to fill the gaps she observed in the majority of auditions she audited, but her approach also reveals certain promise for a theatrical method to be adapted for use in film and television. Her approach offers distillation and simplicity while grounding itself in the psychophysical techniques of Chekhov. Merlin argues that while an actor might have adequate training and technique for the creation of a role for the theatre, which has a multi-week timeline, and has the luxury of the support of a director and stage management team, they are ill-prepared for the process of auditioning. This is significant because

Merlin is the last living student of Michael Chekhov. She began her career as an actress both on stage as well as in film and television. In considering the use of the Chekhovian method in acting pedagogy for film and television, it is encouraging that Merlin engages wholeheartedly with her training with Chekhov to adapt this for a specific, non-stage-performance scenario (the audition). For the purpose of developing a method for film and television, Merlin offers a list of adjectives which she has curated for the creation of *Psychological Gestures*. She also offers a series of questions to promote strong, actionable choices quickly and efficiently. Significantly, this is the only text that deals specifically with the art of auditioning and is grounded in the Michael Chekhov technique.

All these works directly serve the project of a Chekhovian method for film and television. Either they trace the work of Michael Chekhov himself—adaptable and fully realized as it is—or point out its recent rise in applicability in theater departments. Furthermore, they set out what we will call *foundations* in exploring the actual techniques and exercises that make a Chekhovian method for film and television actors a possibility. To a degree, they even suggest that such an adaptation of techniques is warranted under Chekhov’s insistence on adapting his method to one’s own purposes.

And finally, in the literature, there is the last living student of Chekhov who curates a series of questions, which can be used in readying the television and film actors for their performances. This resource directly applies Chekhovian technique to the processes these actors face and facilitates the realization of a film and television-specific technique. The primary question that arises from these authors is what permutations of Chekhov will come to exist when his method is so well-documented and when adaption is so supported. I build upon this research which sets the occasion and foundation to fill unrealized gaps in Chekhov-inspired methods for television and

film. My thesis is thus devoted entirely to Chekhovian techniques for the television and film actor who requires psychophysical freedom and exercises.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Revisiting the Thesis Question

In this thesis, I have aimed to both theoretically and empirically investigate the outcome of introducing, synthesizing, and applying selected techniques of Michael Chekhov within an acting for camera one-semester undergraduate course in a B.A. program.

The results of my thesis course, *Acting on Camera with Ease: Camera Acting Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov*, displayed the numerous benefits of using teaching techniques created by and adapted from Michael Chekhov within the structure of an acting for camera course. Indeed, both a Chekhov-based technique class and an acting for camera course share a series of desired outcomes. These are the use of the whole body to tell the story, the use of concentration and imagination in place of analysis with the goal of a more truthful creation, a focus on “how” actions are completed (or Qualities of Action), and effective use of *Radiating and Receiving* between scene partners. These also centrally include recognition that working from the body first will lead us to emotional truth, which plays out as an effective shortcut during the non-linear filming process on set. The outcomes of the course showed that the Chekhov technique could and does enhance an actor’s ability to remain both emotionally and physically engaged and honest during camera performance.

The student actors in my course had become more aware and confident of their impulses. They became willing to take risks, challenge themselves with their creative choices, and witness their own success. They realized that they, each of them, were able to fill the entire frame while *Radiating and Receiving* in silence and near stillness.

The students in the course were exposed to and developed a series of psychophysical exercises that are now theirs to use through the creation of their own methods, as well as in preparation for an audition or a booking for commercial, film, or television. Through in-class discussions, coaching, observation, recorded rehearsals, performances, feedback in group or solo, and group exercises, the actors have acquired an understanding of valuable techniques and how they might incorporate these into their own methodology. This course has given my student actors core preparation techniques for rehearsal and performance beyond that of simply memorizing their lines. They are now equipped with the ability to creatively explore physically and emotionally, make choices, and arrive at the audition or production with a character that is authentic, specific, and whole. Through our work in sessions on the techniques and their incorporation into the performance assignments, the actors achieved all learning objectives outlined in Chapter 3.

Self-examination through observation of their work in group settings, which included self, peer, and instructor notes, provided immediate feedback on the success of their technique incorporation. Through the thoughtful scaffolding of the assignments, the progression of their work, my instruction, and feedback, my student actors were able to work in a nuanced, articulate, physical, and emotional manner appropriate for the style and filming frame at hand. They had recordings of their work and thus could observe and review their individual progress and ability to perform seamlessly on camera with intentionally complex characters.

Listed below are useful, specific feedback my student actors gave in their final reflections of the course and their work.

- “When I rehearsed my scene in class, I knew what story I wanted to tell and how I could go about telling it. I felt good with my work. Sean made clear for me the moments in which my expressions and actions could make the world of the scene real. Watching my final scene, I not only see, but feel the emotions of a man who does not know what

to expect when called from his desk.”

- “I just felt like I just really came into my own, and I enjoyed my work. I felt like I just truly had fun with the role and experimented a lot with different techniques. I also felt like it was my strongest performance and I just genuinely loved everything about the scene and my work in it. It really forced me to step into an emotion I do not portray often, and I really feel like it helped me expand as an actor.”
- “Overall, I learned it is okay and good to go out of your comfort zone and try things you may have said no to before. I have learned to put fear behind me and just try things out. If it doesn’t work you don’t have to do it again, but I feel like in this class, I learned how to make things work.”
- “When you are extremely memorized, it makes everything else come together. For example, I was the only student memorized for our first commercial, and I think that I was able to really focus on what the text was stating and was able to fully use my body without needing to worry about what line comes next.”
- “I thought that this was the most important class I have taken or will take here at Pitt. I enjoyed the work we did on Chekhov immensely, and I thought the techniques of his that we delved into were immediately engaging, both mentally and physically. My favorite moment of the course was the work we did with psychological gesture. Growing up I had worked in a much more limited manner with psychological gesture, so getting the opportunity to revisit it all these years later was very exciting to me.”
- “I felt incredibly overwhelmed to watch the faces that have since grown familiar appear so confident where I felt so scared. On the very first day of class, I approached my professor (that’s [Sean]), and asked, “Am I supposed to be here?” and you said, “You’re right where you’re supposed to be.” Since that day, I have grown so much not

only as an actor, but as a person, under the guidance of this class. I discovered a stillness I never knew I needed, the confidence I so deeply wanted, and a myriad of voices I didn't know I possessed. Although I still have lengths to go to become the actor I want to be, this class enabled me to step off the platform and onto the metaphorical train where I will hopefully be able to bloom.”

- “Learning how to adapt how I express emotions was a huge challenge I faced in this class, and I feel like I wouldn't have learned as much if not for this class. Recognizing patterns in my expressions were interesting and helpful for both camera acting and stage acting. I think I learned more about myself as an actor in this class because we watched the takes in class with everyone else watching.”
- “This class taught me how to take my time, and more importantly, it gave me the tools to dictate where and when I need that time. I notice myself reading scripts differently, not for the words, but for emotion, for ideas, for images. I've learned that acting is not just an outward appearance, but a reflection in, to be distilled outward through gestures as radiant as the sun. My perspective has shifted from just trying on a character's clothes to stepping into their body and mind, allowing myself to share their visions, passions, and desires. I found the teachings on the creation of these images to be most helpful in discovering each character's individual voice and narrative.”

6.2 Revisions and Suggestions

The students who elected to participate in my course, *Acting on Camera with Ease: Camera Acting Utilizing Selected Techniques of Michael Chekhov* had limited to no experience

with acting for camera or with the psychophysical technique. In our program, the Special Topics courses (in which this thesis class was classified) are open to any student who has taken the general education course called *Introduction to Performance*. Special Topics courses are also of interest to students who are solely focused on acting. This disparity of experience in the enrolled students was not fully anticipated. Although significant progress was made by all students in both acting for camera and psychophysical technique, after contemplating the work of the students and myself I have discovered changes that would benefit the course. First, I would alter the design of the course to introduce and incorporate the Chekhov techniques as a singular study for the first four weeks. I believe that dedicating exclusive time to his techniques as an “immersion” style study, the actors would have felt more confident using his familiar techniques during the transitions to our camera study portion. Chekhov’s work is based on the experience of sensation and relating that sensation inward. So, in reflection, I believe that moving back and forth from Chekhov to camera techniques may have posed an additional challenge for students. In future courses, once connection to the Chekhov techniques has been established, we can then move into the camera techniques together with a common verbal and physical language.

My further reflection revealed that additional support from an undergraduate student Editor from the Film Studies department would prove beneficial to the students. The Editor would be responsible for taking the footage from the Director of Photography and editing scenes together, streamlining the in-class feedback sessions. The students might additionally use a selection from these edited scenes as demonstration of their on camera acting skills for agents and casting directors.

Regarding the selection of exercises, I strongly believe that those selected did offer the students (of a B.A. liberal arts university, with mixed experience levels) an effective introduction to the psychophysical techniques. I believe that starting and grounding our collective work in

Legato and Staccato was essential. In the *Legato and Staccato* practice, the students could observe the work on another body (my own) before they took it into their own. From there, we could begin and revisit our discussion of the *Four Brothers*, the building blocks of the technique. The students were initially very hesitant to take physical risks in experiential exercises. Still, their confidence grew as they continued to adjust their *Legato and Staccato* practice, once they were able to make it their own.

6.3 Final Reflection

The course was rich with obstacles for me, including budgetary limits, access to equipment, fulfilling an “Acting for Camera” course student expectations, and, for nearly all of the students, introducing them to a psychophysical approach to the craft. I led the sessions with passion, optimism, honesty, and discipline to foster trust in the techniques. The resistance to exploring their open and expressive bodies was evident when we began. The students had a strong desire to do it right. Eventually, they learned that their experience of the exercises was all that I was interested in for them. I witnessed less experienced actors with hesitancy in using the techniques become encouraged by their more experienced ensemble members giving over to curiosity. They then would follow in the path and also begin to expand and explore. Students who couldn’t stand to see their own images on screen during Week 2 were later able to keenly observe, clearly articulate their observations, and incorporate their own notes on their work. I witnessed an expansion of confidence in individuals and within the group as the course progressed.

This course was the first time I had taught several of the exercises and concepts of the Chekhov technique. I thoroughly enjoyed the exploration, realizing the need to continue my

training in this technique and its incorporation into camera performance. In conclusion, I experienced joy during the teaching of this work. The students challenged me with questions, their own obstacles, and their initial fear of the expressive form. However, in teaching this course and working through each of these challenges, I have expanded my commitment and grown immensely as a teacher. Perhaps the most valuable lesson I've taken from this experience is to allow myself to take the *Pause*. The students in the class and I shared commonalities in the process: all of us were learning new skills, being seen under an unfamiliar lens, and adapting to an undiscovered system. We were in process, standing side by side. The *Pause* gave us / me space to stand in the moment of unknowingness. It gave us / me the time to nurture curiosity. It provided us a platform from which we said yes to something new...something unplanned...something like a happening.

Appendix A Syllabus and Course Calendar

Appendix A.1 Introduction to Acting For The Camera

Fall 2019

Course: 2201 THEA 1392 – 1080

Mo/We: 3:00-4:15 PM

Classroom: HEYMANN THEATRE

Instructor: Sean Cook

E-mail: SMC225@PITT.EDU

Phone: 213-258-9609

Teaching Assistant: Liam Brown

E-mail: LIB60@PITT.EDU

**Note: Email is the best way to reach me. Please feel free to email any concerns or questions that you may have at any time. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours; not including weekends and holidays.*

Office Hours: Mo/We 1:00pm – 2:30pm (or by appointment)

Office Room #: CL1610

Syllabus

“Real inspired acting is never doing; it is always happening”
— Michael Chekhov

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce the students to the principles of acting for the camera including industry terms, auditioning and acting techniques applied to film, television and commercials. Students will learn and demonstrate script analysis, character development, and scene performances, which will be recorded and reviewed in a classroom setting that resembles an actual on set environment. We will be exploring and applying techniques from the Michael Chekhov technique. We will utilize selections of Chekhov’s psychophysical approach (radiating and receiving, atmosphere, psychological gesture) to create character and sustain character during the impersonal, interruptive, and jarring experience of filming scenes. Scenes will be selected from a range of contemporary projects. Prerequisites: Introduction to Performance

COURSE GOALS

Through our work together over the course of this semester, each of you should experience:

Increased confidence in your presence in front of the camera

A process by which you can prepare, rehearse, and perform in front of the camera while adapting to the shot for each set up

An understanding that you are already infinitely more interesting than anything you might DO with a character or in a scene. BEING is more than DOING.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

Work from a place of physical Ease.

Recognize that our character is in a constant state of Radiating and Receiving.

Become more comfortable viewing themselves on screen and releasing critical thoughts of appearance and instead focus critical thoughts as they pertain to the execution of the techniques in support of the scene narrative.

Practice taking direction and notes in a “real-time” filming environment.

Learn how to find and hit your Mark without indicating.

Understand and modify performances physically and emotionally to fit the frame.

Create several different characters from a psychophysical practice over the course of the term.

Support and care for themselves and their scene partners by offering criticism in a positive, nurturing manner.

Develop professional audition / cold-reading skills for film, television and commercials.

Describe and demonstrate terms related to acting for the camera.

Demonstrate on camera acting techniques in solo, close-up coverage.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Classroom Etiquette

Demonstrate respect for all ideas, beliefs and people.

Avoid making assumptions, generalizations and stereotypes. If you are offended by something (even if spoken by the instructor), please let me know immediately. You can do this anonymously or in the moment; I strive to maintain a safe environment for everyone at all times.

When offering criticism or comments on performance work, focus on the positive aspects and offer specific comments keeping in mind a generosity of spirit.

No cell phones. Please turn them completely off during class. If a cell phone rings or is used during class, this will be counted against your participation grade.

Laptops and other personal computer devices are also not permitted unless by special accommodation through Disability Resources. (*See note at end of syllabus)

Please no food.

No photos or video of class allowed.

Please clean up after class. Leave the space better than you found it.

Please take care of any physiological needs (i.e.- bathroom breaks) before you come to the classroom—entering and exiting during discussion, exercises or scene work can be distracting.

Clothing Guidelines

This is a very active class – warm-ups may include running, jumping, rolling on the floor - so please dress appropriately.

Nothing too tight or revealing.

Limit jewelry.

No flip-flops, high heels, open toes or backless shoes. (Barefoot or rubber-soled shoes are recommended)

No hats should be worn in the classroom and hair should be pulled back from the face.

As a courtesy to your classmates, please go easy on the cologne or perfume.

Exceptions to these guidelines will be made for clothing worn in religious observance.

An example of appropriate wardrobe for our work in class would be a t-shirt and athletic / non-restrictive pants.

You might choose to dress for the scene during final rehearsals and tapings.

Class Participation (10% of final grade)

CLASS PARTICIPATION RUBRIC AND GUIDE				
	A	B	C/D	F
Peer Interaction	Actively supports, engages, and listens to peers (ongoing)	Makes a sincere effort to interact with peers (ongoing)	Limited interaction with peers	Virtually no interaction with peers
Preparation	Arrives fully prepared at every class session	Arrives mostly, if not fully, prepared (ongoing)	Preparation is inconsistent	Rarely or never prepared
Participation	Plays an active role in discussions (ongoing)	Participates constructively in discussions (ongoing)	When prepared, participates constructively in discussions	Comments vague if given; frequently demonstrates lack of interest
Contribution to Class	Comments advance level and depth of dialogue	Relevant comments are based on assigned material	When prepared, relevant comments are based on assignments	Demonstrates a noticeable lack of interest on occasion
Group Dynamics	Group dynamic and level of discussion are often better because of candidate's presence	Group dynamic and level of discussion are occasionally better, but not worse, because of candidate's presence	Group dynamic and level of discussion are sometimes disrupted by candidate's presence	Group dynamic and level of discussion are often disrupted by candidate's presence

It is vital that students participate in all aspects of the class. Your attitude and desire to work is a reflection of your commitment and will be taken into account for your final grade. Please be prepared and eager to play games, rehearse and give comments. In this class you will be performing and watching others perform; both of these activities are active, not passive, and require a true generosity of spirit. Please arrive on time and ready to work! Two late arrivals will count as one absence. Arriving just as class starts is not “on time”. It is late. You should be in class and ready to work at our start time. Please note that appropriate clothing and shoes fall into this category, as inappropriate clothing and footwear affect your ability to fully participate in class activities.

Preparation (18% of final grade).

Each student will be assigned specific scenes to rehearse and perform for the camera. The scenes must be committed to memory and fully prepared for in class rehearsals and final performances, which will be on camera. Additionally, a brief written work will be turned in on the day of your final taping. No late written work will be accepted.

Film Audition / Producer Call Back (18% of final grade)

Students will prepare, rehearse, and perform an audition for a film in a casting office style set up. Students will then be asked to present the audition in a Producer Call Back.

Two-person Scene (18% of final grade)

Students will work with a partner on a scene from an assigned contemporary feature or television production. The focus of this scene will be to work truthfully off of your scene partner (listening & responding) while executing the technical demands of working on set and on camera. This will be filmed in a medium shot. Students will be responsible for blocking, setting the marks, and making suggestions for camera placement for the wide shot and both close-ups.

“Your Artist” Scene (18% of final grade)

Students will prepare, rehearse, and perform a scene from a contemporary feature or television production that features an artist of their choice. This is not a reproduction of the scene. It is an opportunity to take on the role of an admired artist and make it your own. This will be filmed in a medium close-up. Students will block, set marks and suggest camera placement for the medium close-up frame.

Commercial Audition (18% of final grade)

Students will prepare and perform a 45 second commercial audition. The copy will be released several days in advance. Memorization and adaptability are keys for success. Students will slate and be asked a few questions to replicate and interview. Students will be given physically technical blocking and movement during the group explanation. The classroom setting will be set up and run as a commercial casting session.

Required Materials

Selected readings will be posted to CourseWeb throughout the semester. Readings will be no longer than 4-5 pages.

Notebook and folder for handouts

Pen/pencil

Scripts for assigned scenes (TBD)

Additional costumes and props as needed for scene work. Please keep in mind that weapons of any kind (real, toy or prop) are strictly prohibited, as are flames and toxic fumes.

GRADING

Assessment and Grading:

You will be graded on a 1000-point scale based on the following:

In-Class Participation	100
Written Work	180
Film Audition	180
Two Person Scene	180
“Your Artist” Scene	180
<u>Commercial Audition</u>	<u>180</u>

Total Points 1000

Standard University of Pittsburgh grading scale:

97-100 =	87-89 =	77-79 =	65-69 = D
A+	B+	C+	64 > =
93-96 =	83-86 =	73-76 =	F
A	B	C	
90-92 =	80-82 =	70-72 =	
A-	B-	C-	

ATTENDANCE

You will be allowed two absences during the semester. Each absence, after two, will lower your final grade by 4 points. Late arrival interrupts the focus of those students who are on time. (2 late arrivals = 1 absence). If you are absent on a day you are scheduled to present, it is your responsibility to contact your scene partner (s) and switch your time slot with another person or group. If you are often late, or miss a second presentation date, your scene partner may be reassigned, and you may lose your points for that assignment.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. (Plagiarism,

copying of assignments, and cheating will not be tolerated. Violating the University-wide policy on academic honesty will result in automatic failure of the assignment and possible failure of the course.)

DIVERSITY CLAUSE

All participants of this class, both students and instructors, are required to help promote and maintain, at all times, a positive atmosphere in which everyone displays and receives respect, tolerance, and encouragement regardless of race, gender, religion, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

The University of Pittsburgh is committed to the maintenance of a community free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment violates University policy as well as federal, state and local laws. It is neither permitted nor condoned. The coverage of this policy extends to all faculty, researchers, staff, students, vendors, contractors and visitors to the University. Notify your instructor, and/or another trusted University of Pittsburgh official, as soon as possible if you feel you have been sexually harassed.

THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT MEDIA POLICY

In accordance with “The Pitt Promise: A Commitment to Civility,” The University of Pittsburgh Student Code of Conduct, and the professional standards and expectations of our field, students, staff and faculty in the Theatre Arts Department agree to the positive, responsible and respectful use of social media. The Theatre Arts Department’s commitment to civility includes zero tolerance for public aspersion upon students, classes, facilities; the un-approved posting of

production videos or photos, per Equity guidelines; cyber bullying. Any member of the university community may file a complaint in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct and its procedures can be accessed here: <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/studentconduct>. The Pitt Promise may be accessed here: <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittpromise>.

THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT CASTING STATEMENT & MAINSTAGE AND LAB SEASON MISSION

We are committed to producing stories from multiple cultural perspectives, of diverse styles and structures and from multiple time periods. To tell every story upon our stage, students and artists of all abilities, races, genders, sexualities, nationalities, and religions are needed for our casts, our crew, and our production teams. As a department, we are committed to analyzing and understanding a playwright's intentions for location, time and character. We are equally committed to challenging ourselves to think beyond the strictures of given circumstances and historical expectations in production. We are committing to cultivating within our students and faculty a space for artists who are willing to take risks, to stretch themselves and to see each class, audition and production opportunity as a fresh opportunity for greatness.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, please notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services, call 648-7890 (Voice or TDD) to schedule an appointment. The office is located in 216 William

Pitt Union. www.drs.pitt.edu. This information is confidential, and the instructor may not discuss it in the class unless you choose to do so.

OFFICE HOURS

If you have specific problems, concerns, or questions during the course of the semester, please feel free to talk with me during office hours or make an appointment to see me. I am available in office 1610 on the 16th floor of the Cathedral of Learning on Mo/We 1:00pm – 2:30pm.

COURSE CALENDAR

(The Course Calendar is subject to change based on individual class progress)

ay	Wee 1 Mond 8/26	Introduction & Syllabus. Discuss acting on camera vs. acting on stage. Terms.	Assigned: Sign Syllabus Contract
	Wedn 8/28	“Legato and Staccato” / Chekhov’s “Ball Toss” Introduction on camera	Due: Syllabus Contract Assigned: Audition Material / Prompts for written work
2 ay	Week Mond 9/2	LABOR DAY	NO CLASS
esday	Wedn 9/4	“Called an Audible” – Fieldtrip to a Base Camp	Assigned: Rehearse. **ADD DROP ENDS 9/6**
3	Week	View “Introductions” Discuss terms for Feedback.	Assigned: Memorized text.

ay	Mond 9/9	Liam Brown: Show example scenes.	
esday	Wedn 9/11	“Atmosphere” Film rehearsals	
4	Week Mond 9/16	Audition day!	Due: Written work
esday	Wedn 9/18	View Auditions Self/ Peer/ Instructor feedback Liam: Playback Audition scenes.	
5	Week Mond 9/23	Archetypal Characters / Partner work Liam: Example Scenes	
esday	Wedn 9/25	Rehearsing Group 1 with camera	Due: Group 1: blocking, shot suggestions.
6	Week Mond 9/30	Rehearsing Group 2 with camera	Due: Group 2: blocking, shot suggestions.
esday	Wedn 10/2	Rehearsing Group 3 with camera	Due: Group 3: blocking, shot suggestions.
7	Week	Rehearsing Group 4 with camera	Due: Group 3: blocking, shot suggestions.

ay	Mond 10/7		
esday	Wedn 10/9	Film Scenes	Assigned: "Your Artist" scenes Due: Written Work
8 ay	Week Mond 10/14	"Veiling" Viewing Scenes with feedback	
esday	Wedn 10/16	Revisiting Archetypal Character Viewing Scenes with feedback	
9 ay	Week Mond 10/21	Archetypal Gesture Scenes Selections shown to class	Due: Memorized Scene
esday	Wedn 10/23	Archetypal Gesture into Psychological Gesture Group 1 Rehearsal	Assigned: Character's Psychological Gesture Due: blocking, shot suggestions.
10 ay	Week Mond 10/28	Character PG's presented Group 2 Rehearsal	Due: blocking, shot suggestions.
esday	Wedn 10/30	Group 3 Rehearsal	Due: blocking, shot suggestions.
11	Week	Filming Group 1	Due: Written work

ay	Mond 11/4		
esday	Wedn 11/6	Filming Group 2	
12 ay	Week Mond 11/11	Filming Group 3	
esday	Wedn 11/13	Commercial Same-Day Audition Liam: Show example scenes.	Assigned: Commercial copy Due: Memorized Commercial copy
13 ay	Week Mond 11/18	Commercial copy, Audition, Technique, What to expect. "No Acting"	
esday	Wedn 11/20	Slating and the Interview	Assigned: Final Commercial Copy
14 ay	Week Mond 12/2	Final Commercial Audition	Due: Memorized Commercial Copy
esday	Wedn 12/4	Discuss Commercial Audition. Final thoughts.	

We will not meet during exam week.

SYLLABUS CONTRACT

To be signed after reviewing the syllabus and returned to instructor to keep on file.

I, _____, (print name) have read the syllabus and course timeline for Introduction to Acting for the Camera in fall, 2019 and understand the classroom policies, expectations, and rules as stated in the syllabus and timeline. By signing this form, I agree to comply with the policies, requirements, expectations and consequences, accept the outline for this class, and acknowledge the instructors' right to adjust the timeline with due notice.

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Appendix B Exercises

Appendix B.1 Bubble

Exercise 6.2 Bubble

Based on MC's Tool Personal Atmosphere

Atmosphere is one of Chekhov's most useful tools for creating an ambiance onstage, creating the world of the play. When actors work together to create atmosphere, amazing things can happen for the audience: "Atmosphere deepens the perception of the spectator." The audience is pulled in. When the tool is localized to one actor, it can be shorthand for actor's physicality that always tells the story from the character's viewpoint. Unrelated to mood or swaying emotional state, personal atmosphere creates the 'mini-world' of the character that is perceivable for the audience. This would be a fully sustained, fully realized, deeply clear rendering of a character point of view and why she/he makes the choices they make.

Coaching Bubble

Adapted from Chekhov's Work on Personal Atmosphere

Objective: To create a personal atmosphere or perceivable character environment onstage.

Coach:

- In this exercise, your actors are just reacting, not in character but as themselves.

- Have your actors move around the room until they are comfortable in their own body and space.
- When they are ready, ask them to imagine that there is a bubble around them, one which surrounds them all the time. Maybe it surrounds their whole body, maybe just their head, they can decide. Tell them that they can expand or shrink this bubble at any time as they explore.
- Now begin to fill their bubble. Tell them to kinesthetically react to the prompt you give them, or what their bubble is filled with. Instruct them that this is not a 'mood' bubble. They cannot leave the bubble behind when something new draws their attention. This bubble colors their whole world, their whole life. It colors the good days, the bad days and everything in between.
- Begin to give them different bubble fillers to play with. Flow easily back and forth from the abstract through the more constructed:
 - Sunshine
 - Boredom
 - Glitter
 - Hunger
 - Pudding
 - Water
 - Darkness
 - Constant chatter
 - Sand
 - Pieces of glass

- Whispers
- Egg shells
- Feathers
- A spotlight
- Stars
- Loneliness
- Magic
- Thirst
- Puppies
- Snakes
- Feel free to add your own!
- As they move, instruct them not to intellectually attach a value judgment: darkness might be scary for some or comforting for others, but it doesn't have to be anything. Ask them instead to just play with 'whatever shows up.'
- Encourage them also not to 'perform' for each other or you but rather to allow themselves to discover and be surprised by what appears.
- Give them permission to keep open within the bubble if nothing immediately appears or something strange appears in response to a prompt. Practicing non-judgment in response to their reactions will serve them well here.
- Ask them not only to keep moving around the room but also to try things like sitting down, standing up, saying up, saying a few sentences to someone, asking a question.

- Once they have run through many, ask them to pick one that really resonated with them or was fun to work with, ask them to return to it and then have them move through the room acting on each new prompt layer on top of what they are already doing:
- All the bubble to filter everything that comes in or goes out.
- Allow your character to be someone in . . . (this city, this high school, this university, etc.).
- Allow your character to be having a bad day. Perhaps they got up late? Missed an appointment? Lost something they needed? Fought with someone?
- Allow your character to be having a great day. Perhaps they had a nice surprise? Met with a good friend? Found something they have been looking for? Just made a new connection?
- Once they have played with one bubble, ask them to switch to a different bubble filter that is the opposite of the one they were working with. Then run through the list of prompt layers again.
- Take the ensemble back through possible good days and bad days. Consider tailoring the days and moments in the days to the place in which your ensemble is actually working in. Examples:
- New York City. Just missed the express train! Now you have to take the local.
- High School. Failed that calculus test you thought you were ready for.
- University. Slept through that 8.30 class again? Now what?
- Once they have worked through the second filter, ask them to fill the bubble with something else—something that reminds them of their character. Once they have

picked the bubble filter, ask them to play with it (sitting, standing, talking, asking, telling, etc.).

- Once they have worked with this bubble a little, ask them to visualize the play and have their characters move through each of the days and moments between the scenes. Give them time to do this, each on their own.
- When they have finished, allow them to get up in front of each other and pick one moment from the play (or implied by the play) that they can show their character in their bubble. Example of moments from plays include:
 - Hedda Gabler, after she burned the manuscript—getting ready for bed by herself.
 - Juliet waiting for the nurse to return.
 - Romeo hiding below Juliet's window before she gets there.
 - Medea playing with her children the day before she will murder them.
 - Antigone walking with Jason on her way home, the night before she will give herself up to die.
- Once they have performed, ask those watching to see if they can guess what was in each actor's bubble. If they do guess correctly—great, if they don't guess, that's okay too. Let actors know that sometimes, in order for the actor to find what they need to make the character resonate in a powerful way to the audience, they have to find a 'secret' image. What they find doesn't have to be strictly transparent to the audience. The energy, not the exact image, is what needs to be clear to the audience.
- Be sure to discuss what you as a facilitator saw as well and what is working or resonant for you as the director or teacher. If something was too blatant, you can always work with a veiling exercise to pull atmosphere more inward. Vice versa if you would like them to be more visible to an audience. Example:

- Ask all the actors to stand and work on their character bubbles and then take them through the numbers 1-7 in random order.
- Then, as you work the scene work, ask them to bring the bubble into the scene and if you want more, ask them to reveal the energy of the bubble at a higher level. (You seem to be at a 2 or 3 here. reveal at a 4.6.7!) Call these numbers out during the scene and make sure the actors know to keep playing through while you coach. You can even go back and forth—3, 5, 2, 7!
- If you want them to be more realistic, consider the same exercise in the other direction: ask them to reveal the energy of the bubble at a lower level. (You seem to be at a 6 or 7 here. reveal at a 3.2.1!) If they are working on subtlety, make sure you encourage them to keep the energy level the same underneath—just to change the level at which they reveal this energy to the audience. That way your performances will always be exciting—‘simmering’ up and underneath. Also, as before, encourage simmering with the whole body for a whole body/360-degree performance.

Appendix B.2 Tornado

Exercise 6.5 Tornado: Activating Personal Atmosphere through the Body and Voice

Based on MC’s Tool Personal Atmosphere

Working with the ideas from Exercise 6.2 ‘Bubble’, which focuses on Chekhov’s explorations of personal atmosphere, here Samantha Norton offers an excellent vocal and physical

warm-up that introduces a set internal atmosphere to work with, and one that can give actors the sensation of a full body experience.

Coaching Tornado

Based on Chekhov's Ideas on Personal Atmosphere

By Samantha Norton

This all-encompassing exercise complements Chekhov's concept of Personal Atmosphere with a touch of understanding what 'Radiating' can feel like!

Objective: At the end of the Tornado exercise, your students will experience expansiveness in their breath, voice and movement free of physical/psychological restriction.

Coach the Tornado Prep:

- To begin, have everyone lie on the floor, eyes closed, with enough space between to roll about and swing their arms. If space is limited, you'll ask your students to open their eyes when they become more physical.
- As their instructor, let your students know that the exercise will take 5, 10 or 15 minutes, depending on your time (this keeps you and them from rushing or anticipating the next step).

Sharing the Treasures

- Share with the actors:
- You have been told that a Tornado is soon to come your way. You do not need to run because you know the storm will not harm you. Instead, you anticipate its arrival.
- Begin by observing your calm, easy breath. With your eyes closed, notice to your right or left a small dark cloud. You can barely see it, but you notice it spinning.

- Now, place that tiny spinning image inside your belly button. Imagine it starting to spin inside you, very small and almost invisible at first. Add your breath to this image. Now let your breath and imagination allow the Tornado to start spinning out to your ribs and back. Start to feel your torso move in sync with your ‘spinning’ breath.
- Your stomach is becoming more engaged and the breath is stronger. Once you feel you have the Tornado filling your chest and back, allow the arms, legs and head to be activated by the rhythm of the breath a bit more.
- Keep the image of the Tornado filling your body all the way out to your fingers, toes, neck and top of your head. By now your body and breath are moving faster.
- Soon the momentum of the breath and movement will take your body to one side or the other and eventually up to standing (eyes open if it’s a crowded space).
- Once you find yourself standing, keep moving the body in any direction the Tornado may take you. It doesn’t have to be spinning, you can move in any direction your breath takes you. (This is the biggest part of the Tornado!)
- Keep breathing and moving up to the point where you feel the storm has reached its peak inside you.
- Now, begin to slowly, with your breath and movement, let the Tornado get smaller; taking it all the way back to you finding yourself on the floor where the storm shrinks back into a tiny dot in your belly button.
- On one final exhale, blow that tiny dot away.

Appendix C On Set Intro Packet

Appendix C.1 Terms

Terminology Used on Film Sets

“10-4”: Short for “I understand” or “copy.”

“10-100”: Short for “Going to the honey wagon”; a trip to the bathroom.

“What’s your 20?” Short for “Where are you?”

“Action”: Director’s cue for the actors and/or action to begin.

“Back to First Marks”: Instruction for actors/extras to return to their first positions; also referred to as “Ones.”

“Background”: Cue for extras and any other background action elements to begin their action.

Call Time: The time you must be on set or location, ready to work.

Circus: Makeup, Hair and Wardrobe Trucks, Honey wagons, Mobile Dressing Rooms and Catering.

Company Move: Short for “We’re on the move”; this means that the entire unit is finished at that location and is

“Cut”: The call to stop the action. Before releasing any lock-up make sure you hear cut from the 1st AD.

Day for Night: Using special camera lenses, lighting and film stock to create a night look during the day.

Exterior: Outdoor shot

Extras: Performers hired to provide background action; also known as the “background performers”.

Genie Lift: A raising platform/crane used mainly for high angle shots and lighting for exterior night shots.

“Go Again”: Repeat the same shot. (Get used to hearing this one).

Honey-wagon: Washroom truck.

Hot Set: The set is ready for shooting and must remain exactly as is for continuity (high priority).

Interior: Indoor shot.

“Lock It Up”: Short for “Be quiet and get ready for cameras to roll

Martini Shot: Last shot before wrap; also “Window Shot”

MOS: Mute On Screen. Camera is rolling but not recording sound.

Pick-Up: Re-filming part of a scene from a specific point in the action.

“Picture’s up”: Rehearsal is complete; cameras will roll on the next action.

“Roll Camera”: Cue to the camera operator to begin rolling film.

“Roll Sound”: Cue to the sound mixer to begin recording sound.

“Rolling”: Film and sound are rolling; action is about to begin. Be quiet and still!

Room Tone: Recording dead air (no dialogue) for matching sound ambience during post-production. Be quiet!

“Speed”: Response heard from Sound Mixer after “Roll Sound”, meaning that the machine is up to speed.

“Stand By”: Hold your positions for a temporary delay and be prepared for rolling.

Star Wagon: Mobile dressing room for actors

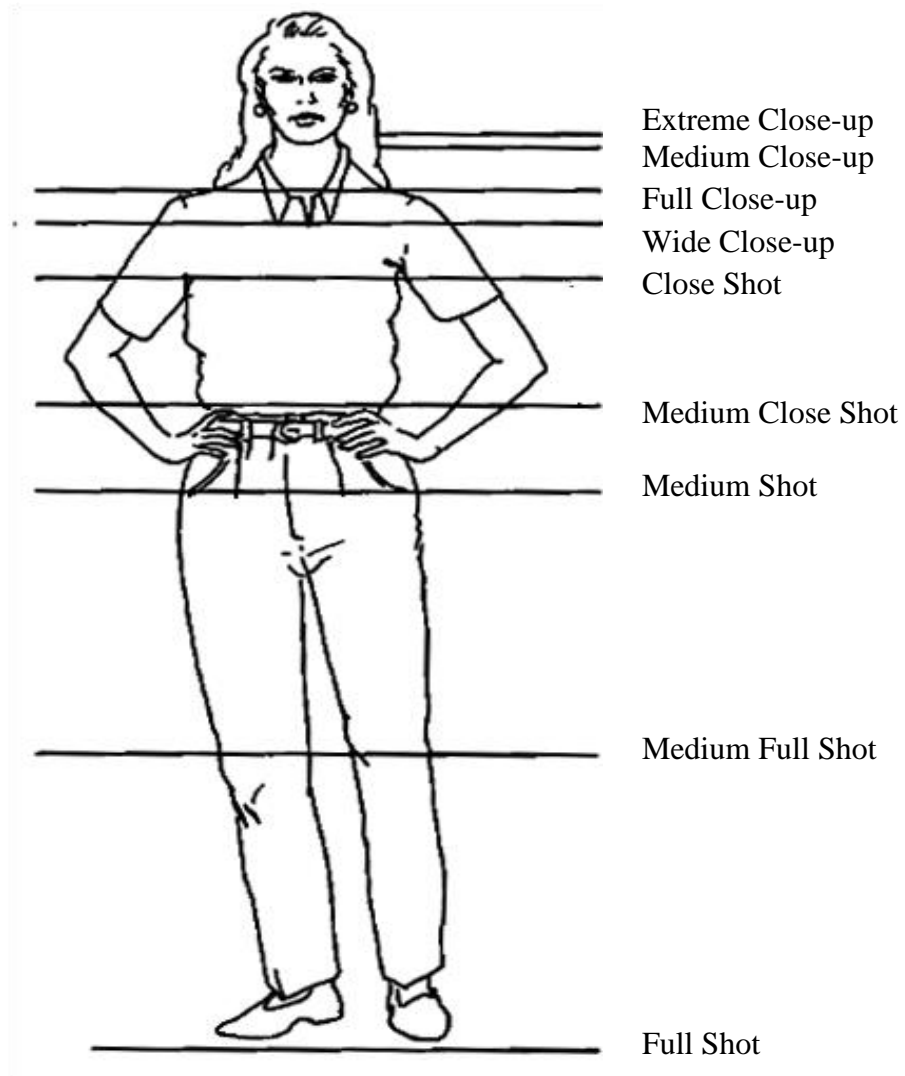
Tow Shot: A sequence where a picture car is towed by a camera truck for traveling car scenes.

“Turn Around”: Reversing the camera angle 180 degrees. This is not to be confused with crew turnaround, which is the required rest period between workdays.

Wild Sound: Recording specific dialogue or sounds without the camera rolling, for editing purposes; also “wild lines.”

Wrap: The end of the shooting day (finally!).

Appendix C.2 Framing



Appendix C.3 On Set Positions

Art Department

Art Directors – The art director works with the production designer and is responsible for the design and construction of a movie set. They are essentially assistants to the production designer and help construct the “look” and “feel” of the movie.

Prop Maker – Prop makers and sculptors construct unique and specialized set props that are too difficult to attain, or too expensive to buy. This person builds these needed props from scratch using various materials that may include Styrofoam, plastics, electronics, metals, woods or glass types of materials. This person is usually skilled in a wide variety of machining, construction and sculpting techniques.

Prop Master – The prop master acquires, organizes, maintains and accounts for all the various props needed for the production. A prop is basically any set decoration piece that can be moved readily easily. This includes many items like guns, knives, books, phones, dishware, food, musical instruments, pets or any other item that needs to be present to fulfill the story line.

Scenic Artist / Painter – The scenic artist is in charge of designing and treating all of the set surfaces. This may include painting, plastering, coloring, texturing or applying any other sort of treatment to the set surfaces to create a look. Often times the scenic artist simulates stone, wood, lettering, metallic or brick on the various sets and scenery.

Set Construction Coordinator / Builder – The construction coordinator supervises the fabrication and physical integrity of the various sets needed as directed by the production designer and art director. This person is also in charge of budgeting and ordering the needed materials for the set designs. The construction coordinator may also be responsible for hiring the carpenters.

Set Decorator / Dresser – The set decorator makes the decisions on what furnishings and other decorations are going to be used on set. This person works closely with the art director and production designer to create the optimal visual environment for filming. This may include various items such as paintings, fabrics, and other non-movable decorative set pieces.

Storyboard Artist – The storyboard artist creates a series of illustrations and sketches based on the director's vision during pre-production. Each sketch represents a different camera set-up. These drawings usually include camera angles, characters and set design. The illustrations are then used to assist the other head departments in understanding their tasks.

Camera Department

Camera Assistant (1st AC) – The 1st AC is the chief assistant to the camera operator. The 1st assistant camera person is in charge of measuring and pulling focus during filming. The 1st AC also threads the film through the camera when a new magazine is loaded. This person also helps setup and build the camera, as well as maintain and clean the camera and lenses.

Camera Assistant (2nd AC) – The 2nd AC is also known as the loader. The 2nd assistant camera person is primarily responsible for loading and unloading the new rolls of film into the different magazines, as well as maintaining and filling out all the camera reports for the film lab. This person also runs the slate or clapper to maintain sync and the correct labeling for each and every shot.

Camera Operator – The camera operator physically controls and operates the camera during filming, under the direction of the D.P. (Director of Photography). The camera operator works closely with both A.C.'s as well. The camera operator controls the shot's framing, and the camera movements as instructed by the director of photography.

Camera Operator (Aerial) – The aerial photographer or camera operator is qualified and equipped to film aboard aerial devices. This usually refers to small airplanes and helicopter filming, but more recently, the use of drone cameras is being widely used as well.

Camera Operator (Jib Arm / Crane) – This person is responsible for setting up and operating the mechanical camera crane also known as the “jib arm”. The jib arm is primarily used for large establishing shots that require substantial elevation and smooth motion.

Data Wrangling – This is a relatively new job position that has been created in response to the popular use of digital video formats. The data wrangler is usually responsible for organizing, labeling, downloading, duplicating and reformatting the digital storage disks for use on set and the editing room.

Digital Imaging Technician – This is another new job position that was created in response to the popular use of high-end digital video formats. The digital imaging technician uses various image manipulation methods to achieve the highest possible image quality during the production. This person usually manages the transferring and storage of the image data as well.

Director of Photography – The director of photography (D.P.) is in charge of the overall visual look of the film, as seen through the camera. They recommend which cameras and lenses to use for the production. They design the shot’s framing, and the camera movements in conjunction with the director. They are also in charge of the camera crew, lighting design and collaborating with the gaffer.

Photographer / Production Stills – This person takes still photographs and essentially documents the behind-the-scenes making of the production. Often, this person photographs images used for marketing purposes such as movie posters and DVD box art.

Steadicam Owner / Operator – The Steadicam is a camera mounting device that utilizes a mechanical arm attached to a body harness to provide extremely smooth hand-held shots. The

Steadicam operator is responsible for setting up and operating the Steadicam during production. Most Steadicam operators are very physically fit due to the amount of strength and endurance needed to operate the Steadicam.

Videographer – This person creates the video that essentially documents the behind-the-scenes making of the movie. This video isn't normally used in the final version of the film. It's only used for the purposes of documentation.

Food Department

Assistant Food Stylist – The assistant food stylist assists the lead food stylist in the preparations and arrangements of the food. This person usually has an extensive background in cooking, recipe development, and the ability to assist in achieving creative solutions for making the food look the most attractive.

Craft Service – Craft Services are the various snacks and beverages that are provided to the film crew throughout the day. This is separate from catering. The person in charge of craft service sets up and maintains a station near production that provides these snacks and beverages. The craft service person is given a budget prior to attaining all the refreshments.

Food Stylist – The food stylist will prepare and arrange food in an appealing way to be used in photographs, commercials or movies. This person usually has an extensive background in cooking, recipe development, and the ability to achieve creative solutions for making the food look its most attractive.

Lighting & Grip Department

Best Boy – The best boy is the lead electrician on set and is in charge of all the other electricians, similar to how the key grip is in charge of all the grips. The best boy usually operates, adjusts and balances the electrical load on the generator where required. This person is also responsible for distributing the electrical cabling properly providing the required power to each of the lights.

Electrician – The electricians (or juicers) essentially set up and operate all the lighting instruments and cabling as instructed by the best boy or gaffer. This is a physically demanding job due to the large number of heavy lights and cabling often required. Electricians must be knowledgeable of tungsten and HMI lighting as well as changing and installing bulbs properly.

Gaffer – The gaffer is also known as the chief lighting technician. This person is primarily responsible for developing a lighting plan according to the desires of the Director of Photography. The gaffer informs the best boy and key grip on where and which lights are to be placed. The gaffer is in charge of creating the best possible lighting scenario according to the camera framing.

Grip – Grips essentially “shape the light” that is provided by the electricians. This includes creating pattern and shadow effects, coloring light, diffusing light or blocking light. While electricians set up the lights and cabling, grips provide everything else that is built around the lights to create the quality of light that the gaffer desires. They also provide a variety of special rigging, securing and safety measures on set.

Key Grip – The key grip is the lead grip on a film set and in charge of all the other grips. The key grip and best boy collaborate with the gaffer and D.P. to formulate the best tactic for accomplishing a given shot. The key grip oversees the proper camera rigging mechanisms as well as manages the light blocking and diffusing techniques.

Locations Department

Location Manager – This person is in charge of attaining all the legal permits and other clearances needed to gain proper permission for filming in a particular location. The location manager also takes care of attaining and processing any other location permit fees as well. On some smaller shoots, the location manager assists in coordinating the parking of vehicles.

Location Scout – Quite often the location scout is one of the first crew members to be contacted on a production. The location scout assists in finding the various filming locations according to the producer and director's desires. Location scouts often have a large database of location photographs to show before traveling to the actual location for filming.

Makeup & Wardrobe Department

Costume Designer – The costume designer makes decisions on which wardrobes and costumes actors will wear based on the script requirements and character portrayals. Costume designers create or choose various clothing patterns, designs, colors, sizes and accessories for each wardrobe used during production. On larger movies, the costume designer has several assistants helping to organize, disperse and maintain all the costumes used by the cast.

Hair Stylist – This person is responsible for styling and maintaining the talent's hair throughout filming. The hair stylist is usually equipped with all of the appropriate supplies needed for the hair styling process. The hairdresser works in conjunction with the make-up artist to attain the best possible look for the actors and actresses.

Makeup Artist – The makeup artist's main task is to apply and create a variety of looks on the actors and actresses skin surfaces with makeup, from current trends to classic or period

pieces. The makeup artist creates a look according to the director's desires, often inspired by the characterizations in a story.

Special FX Makeup – The prosthetics or special effects makeup person uses a variety of techniques for applying and gluing different materials such as latex, gelatin and other colorations which are used on the face or skin of an actor. Gore and blood, burns, creatures and aging special effects are the more commonly used prosthetic makeup techniques.

Wardrobe Stylist – The wardrobe stylist works closely with the costume designer and assists with preparing everything related to the actors clothing, costumes and wardrobe. Common tasks of the wardrobe assistant are maintaining and styling for all the wardrobes worn by the various actors. They also assist in helping to organize, disperse and account for all the costumes used on set.

Production Department

Assistant Director / 1st AD – The 1st assistant director works with both the production manager and the director to make the shooting schedule efficient as possible. The 1st A.D. breaks the script down into a shooting schedule and also helps manage the scheduling of talent, crew and equipment needed for each shooting day. This person sometimes helps direct the background extras in a scene.

Assistant Director / 2nd AD – The 2nd A.D. works directly with the 1st A.D. to accomplish their duties. The call sheets for each shooting day are created by the 2nd assistant director. The 2nd A.D. also helps manage the scheduling of talent, crew and equipment that is needed for each day. This person also assists in directing the background extras in a movie scene.

Director – The director is the leading creative artist on a movie set. The director works

directly with the actors on their performances and has final creative control on almost every aspect of the film. The director plays a large role in casting, script revisions, shot composing and even editing. Usually, the director is hired by the producer of the film.

Line Producer – The line producer supervises the entire budget of the movie. Expenses may include celebrity salaries as well as daily costs like location and equipment rentals. The production manager reports to the line producer the current expenses and needs of the production on an ongoing basis.

Producer – The producer helps organize the entire production. This person helps develop the script into a workable project. They assist with the hiring of actors and key crew members, while keeping track of finances throughout the production. The producer oversees script progress and often assists in creating final distribution plans for the movie.

Production Assistant – Many individuals start their careers in the film industry as a production assistant. A production assistant usually does any general duty or minor task that the production heads may need. Basic duties may include dispersing walkie-talkies, setting up pop-up tents and tables, running basic errands as needed or attaining any other last-minute item that the production might need. It is essential that the P.A. has their own transportation to perform these various errands.

Production Coordinator – A production coordinator is responsible for coordinating the “behind the scenes” logistics, which can include renting equipment, hiring crew members, and coordinating talent. In addition, this crew member may handle the paperwork needed to organize the production. For this reason, the production coordinator is an important crew member in ensuring a production’s goals are on budget and on time.

Production Designer – The production designer works with the director and is primarily responsible for the design and overall visual “look” and “feel” of a movie. This includes the use

of costumes, landscapes, props and other visual scenery that could reflect the movie script.

Production Manager – The production manager works closely with the production coordinator. This person helps supervise the organization and distribution of the production budget, crew & equipment scheduling, salaries, day rates, and other office related paperwork. This person reports budget needs to the line producer, while trying to keep the production under budget on a day to day basis.

Production Secretary – The production secretary is the assistant to the production manager. This person assists with the paperwork for the crew & equipment scheduling, timecards & invoicing, crew deal memo's and other related office materials. The production secretary usually helps complete most of the paperwork needed to properly finish the production.

Script & VTR Department

Script Supervisor / Continuity – The script supervisor works closely with the director by taking detailed notes concerning what has been shot, needs to be shot, and also notes any deviations from take to take. He/she also makes sure that the dialogue corresponds with the script. The script supervisor also takes logging notes that are essential in the postproduction editing process, such as locating shots and finding the best takes. Many times, the script supervisor assumes the role of continuity, ensuring the consistency between scenes and shots.

Teleprompter Operator – The teleprompter is a device that mounts to the front of the camera and contains a scrolling text for the actor to read while looking into the lens. This technique is also used by newscasters. The teleprompter operator helps set up the teleprompter on the camera as well as the computer that provides the scrolling text program. This person is usually given the script ahead of time so that they can enter it into their computer before arriving on set.

Video Assist Operator – The video assist person operates the VTR (Video Tape Recorder) during production. Most film cameras include a video tape that allows the VTR to record and instantly playback what was just filmed. Since you can't review 35mm film without it getting processed in the laboratory first, this can be an especially useful tool on set. Video assist is the term used to describe this record and playback process. Reviewing the footage instantly allows the director to confirm performances, camera focus, framing, choreography and other elements for accuracy.

Sound Department

Boom Operator / Utility – This person is responsible for properly positioning the microphone boom pole during the actual filming. The boom operator is the assistant to the sound mixer. Many times, the boom operator is required to hold the boom pole for several minutes at a time, which can be physically demanding. The boom operator must also be able to follow the actor's movements while staying clear of the camera and lights. This makes it a challenging job for achieving the best possible audio.

Sound Mixer – The sound mixer for film is head of the sound department and is responsible for leveling, monitoring and recording of audio during production. The sound mixer decides which microphones to use as well as placements of the microphones. This person can also mix the various soundtracks and audio signals in real time. A film sound mixer supervises the boom operator and/or sound utility person.

Stunts & FX Department

Pyro Technician / Explosives – Sometimes also known as the armorer, this person is primarily responsible for the handling, maintenance and care of all firearms, weapons and pyrotechnics that are used during filming. This includes all live-action explosives and battle scene pyro effects. Pyro technicians are usually trained and certified to handle these dangerous props and explosives.

Special Effects Coordinator – The special effects coordinator designs and supervises the various effects needed for filming through the use of mechanical and/or optical illusion techniques. The special effects coordinator provides the visual elements needed such as recreating weather elements or assisting with props that break, shatter, collapse, burn, smoke or explode. They also provide the special mechanical rigging that allows you to fly an actor.

Special Effects Technician – A special effects technician works under the special effects coordinator and assists in physically creating the visual elements needed like weather elements, or assisting with props that break, shatter, collapse, burn, smoke or explode. They also help build the special mechanical rigging that allows you to fly an actor.


Stunt Coordinator – The stunt coordinator manages and coordinates all the dangerous action sequences in a movie that require a stuntman or stunt performer. The stunt coordinator always follows the appropriate safety regulations during filming to ensure the safety of every stunt performer. Types of stunts may include jumping, flipping, diving, free-falling, crashing cars, catching fire, underwater stunts and other dangerous action sequences where stunt doubles are needed.

Transportation Department

Captains / Gang Boss – The transportation coordinator, or gang boss, organizes and provides a variety of vehicles and transportation for all crew, equipment and actors to and from the filming locations. The transportation coordinator/captain deploys the appropriate vehicles and drivers at the proper times to keep the production on schedule and on budget. They also work closely with the locations manager in attaining the proper parking permits and parking locations for all vehicles.

Transportation Driver – The transportation driver works under the supervision of the transportation captain. Transportation drivers physically drive and operate all provided production vehicles to and from the filming locations. This includes the transport of all crew, equipment and actors safely to and from the film set while staying on schedule. Types of production vehicles may include cube trucks, passenger vans, stake beds, flatbeds, limos, cars or any other needed production vehicle.

Appendix C.4 Call Sheet

										Monday, October 9, 2017			
Producer/Director: Ben McPherson Producer: Clay Vandiver Producer: Brad Skaar Line Producer: Dwjuan Fox UPM: Porter Lontz-Underhill		GENERAL CREW CALL						Breakfast		5:30 AM			
		<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;">6:00 AM</div>						Shooting		7:00A			
								Call					
								Lunch		12:00P			
								Script		v7 -			
								Revision		9/15/17			
								Schedule		25 -			
								Version		9/15/17			
LOCATION		NEAREST HOSPITAL		CREW PARKING		BASECAMP		WEATHER					
87 4 Corners Rd N, Heron, MT 59844		Bonner General 520 N. 3rd Ave. Sandpoint, ID 83864		87 4 Corners Rd N, Heron, MT 59844		87 4 Corners Rd N, Heron, MT 59844		Sunny					
								Sunrise	58°	Humidity	32°		
								High	6:57A	Rain %	10%		
								Sunset	6:08P	Low	0%		
SAFETY FIRST		NO FORCED CALLS WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF UPM		NO SOCIAL MEDIA ON SET WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF UPM		NO SMOKING ON SET		NO VISITORS WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF UPM					
SCENE S	PAGES	SET & DESCRIPTION		TIME	OUT	D/N	CAS T	NOTES	LOCATION				
89	1 2/8	INT. MAW'S SHACK (ATTIC LOFT) <i>Reese tries to escape.</i>		2h32m	11:04 AM	Night 4	1, 6	Maw Double	87 4 Corners Rd N				
90	1/8	INT/EXT. COUNTY ROAD 41 <i>Farmer Glenn makes idle chit chat</i>		0h30m	3:53 PM	Day 4	6	Process Trailer	87 4 Corners Rd N				

108	1/8	INT/EXT. COUNTY ROAD 41 <i>FLASHBACK - Farmer Glenn "Life & Death are DUST"</i>	0h20m	11:24 AM	Day FB	1, 7	Flashback	87 4 Corners Rd N
106	2/8	INT/EXT. COUNTY ROAD 41 <i>Rick shoots Farmer Glenn</i>	3h13m	2:37 PM	Day 4	1, 7		87 4 Corners Rd N
A155	2 3/8	INT/EXT. MAW'S (LONG SHED) TRUCK <i>Reese draws curtain, looks out the window</i>	1h31m	8:31 AM	Day 4	1, 6, 7	Camper	87 4 Corners Rd N
118	1 1/8	INT. MAW'S (LONG SHED) TRUCK <i>Reese looks out window, Rick advances to the wall</i>	0h30m	4:23 PM	Day 4	1, 11	Camper	87 4 Corners Rd N
TIME PERMITTING								
99p1	5/8	INT/EXT. HIGHWAY (GREEN CHEVY) <i>Rick drives, Reese is in the back</i>	0h15m	5:30 PM	Day 4	1, 7	Driving	87 4 Corners Rd N
99	1/8	INT/EXT. HIGHWAY (GREEN CHEVY) <i>INSERT; GAUGE</i>	0h50m	5:14 PM	Day 4			87 4 Corners Rd N
6 TOTAL PAGES								
ID	CAST	CHARACTER	STATUS	PICKUP	REPORT	H/MU/W	SET	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
7	Miles Anderson	FARMER GLENN	WF	9:45 AM	6:15 AM	6:15 AM	11:00 AM	Pickup @ 6:30 AM
6	Sean Cook	REESE	W	5:30 AM	7:15 AM	7:15 AM	7:00 AM	Pickup @ 9:45 AM
7	Brighton Sharbino	RICK	W	6:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	8:00 AM	Pickup @ 5:30 AM
QTY	STAND-INS	CALL	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS BY DEPARTMENT					
1	Reese Stand-In	7:00A	PROPS Cassette Tape, Reese's Backpack, Reese's iPhone, Bag of Sunflower Seeds, Rick's Sunglasses, Rick's Gun, Blood Splatter, Small Pocket Knife, Rick's Bag, Cigarette, Lighter, Wheelchair, Cane, Quilt, Maw's Glasses MU/HAIR Reese Forehead Cut, Farmer Glenn Shot WARDROBE Reese (D4), Farmer Glenn (D4), Rick (D4), Farmer Glenn Shot, Torn Socks SSET DRESS Tattered Confederate Flag, Interior Camper Dressed					

			WEAPONS Rick's Gun
			PIC VEH Farmer Glenn's Camper, Process Trailer, Rick's Car
			VFX iPhone battery reading
			ADDL EQUIP Process Trailer
			ADDL LABOR Jerry
			NOTES
1	TOTAL STANDINS / BACKGROUND		

<i>ADVANCED SCHEDULE - DAY 20 - TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2017 - ESTIMATED CALL TIME: 6:00 AM</i>								
<i>SCENES</i>	<i>PAGES</i>	<i>SET & DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>OUT</i>	<i>D/N</i>	<i>CAST</i>	<i>NOTES</i>	<i>LOCATION</i>
2/8 87	2/8 87	EXT. FARM HOUSE (GRAVE) <i>Reese at Chris' grave</i>	1h01m	8:01 AM	Morning 4	1, 6		1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
86 1/8	86 1/8	EXT. FARMER GLENN'S (FARM HOUSE)	0h30m	8:32 AM	Morning 4			1626 W. Center Valley Rd.

		<i>ESTABLISHING, Farm house in the distance</i>						
79	1/8	EXT. FARMER GLENN'S (FARM HOUSE) <i>The evening sun shapes the humble farm house.</i>	0h30m	9:03 AM	Evening 3			1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
88	4/8	INT/EXT. FARM HOUSE (DRIVEWAY) <i>Reese sits in the truck</i>	2h03m	11:51 AM	Morning 4	1	6 Camper	87 4 Corners Rd N
77	2/8	EXT. FARM GLENN'S (PASTURE) <i>Farmer Glenn and Reese in a RANGER ATV</i>	1h01m	12:52 PM	Day 3	1, 6		1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
100	2/8	EXT. COUNTRY RD 42 <i>Frank sees Farmer Glenn's dead body</i>	1h01m	1:54 PM	Day 4	2, 6	Frank's Truck	1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
96	3/8	INT/EXT. FARMER GLENN'S (HOUSE)	1h32m	3:26 PM	Day 4	2	Frank's Truck	1626 W. Center Valley Rd.

		<i>Frank pulls into the Farm House driveway</i>						
97	1/8	INT. FARM HOUSE (ROOM) <i>Frank sees blood on the couch</i>	0h30m	3:57 PM	Day 4	2		1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
98	3/8	EXT. FARM GLENN'S (GRAVE) <i>Frank finds Chris grave</i>	1h32m	5:29 PM	Day 4	2		1626 W. Center Valley Rd.
94	1/8	INT/EXT. FARMER GLENN'S (DIRT ROAD) <i>Frank spots Farmer Glenn's farm</i>	0h30m	6:00 PM	Day 4	2	Frank's Truck	1626 W. Center Valley Rd.

2 4/8 TOTAL PAGES

LineProducer: Dwjuan Fox

1st AD: Ryan P. Shrim

WALKIE CHANNELS: 1--PRODUCTION 2--TALK OVER 4--VANITIES 7--ELECTRIC 8--GRIP 9--

ART 11--CAMERA

RADIOFLASH				Monday, October 9, 2017 Day 19 of 28			
✓	TITLE	NAME	CAL	✓	TITLE	NAME	CALL
PRODUCERS				ELECTRIC			
	Producer/Director	Ben McPherson	O/C		Gaffer	Ian Carre-Burnitt	6:00A
	Producer	Clay Vandiver	O/C		Best Boy Electrician	Chris Nealy	6:00A
	Producer	Brad Skaar	O/C		Electrician	Aaron Kish	6:00A
	Writer	Matt Redhawk	N/C		Electrician	Scotty Frazer	6:00A
	Assistant to Producers	Tommy Dunn	O/C	GRIP			
PRODUCTION					Key Grip	Lucas Staley	6:00A
	Line Producer	Dwjuan Fox	O/C		Best Boy Grip	Ariana Tate Mussenden	6:00A
	Unit Production	Porter Lontz-	6:00A		Grip	Breo Freeman	6:00A
	Production	Lanie Albin	6:00A		Grip	Joe Timko	6:00A
	Key Set PA	Joey	Per	SOUND			
	Production Office	Blake Boesky	Per		Sound Mixer	Woody Stubblefield	6:00A
	Production Office	Morgan Hage	Per		Boom Operator	Ivy Lindsey	6:00A
	Production Assistant	Scott Porter	Per	CONTINUITY			
	Production Assistant	Rebecca Ocampo	Per		Script Supervisor	Amy Arter	6:00A
	Production Assistant	Eric Snyder	Per	HAIR & MAKE-UP			
	Production Assistant	Donnie Martinez	Per		Key Makeup Artist	Deirdra Portillo	6:00A
	Production Assistant	Mason Storm	6:00A		Key Hair	Cristina Fabien	6:00A
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS				WARDROBE			
	1st Assistant Director	Ryan P. Shrimel	6:00A		Costume Designer	Angela Hadnagy	6:00A
	2nd Assistant Director	Tim Astor	6:00A		Seamstress/Tailor	Milda Bublys	6:00A
	2nd Assistant Director	Tyler Evans	6:00A		Costumer	Cricket Green	6:00A
CAMERA				ART DEPARTMENT/SET DECORATION/PROPERTY			
	Director of	Austin Schmidt	6:00A		Production Designer	Susannah Lowber	6:00A
	1st AC	Auston Call	6:00A		Set Decorator/Leadsman	Tom Olson	Per SL
	2nd AC	Nick Memo	6:00A		Set Dresser	Whitney Veloski	Per SL
	Steadicam Operator	Conner Vandeer	6:00A		Prop Master	Jeffrey Crow	Per SL
	DIT	Chuck Miller	6:30A		Assistant Prop Master	Blake Nelson	Per JC
CASTING				SPECIAL EFFECTS			
	Casting Director	Jeremy	N/C		F/X Designer	Jefferson Wagner	N/
	Casting Associate	Hollie	N/C		Special Effects	Neil Smith	N/
	Background Casting	Lance	N/C	STUNTS			
STUDIO TEACHER					Stunt Coordinator	Tony Snegoff	N/
	Certified Studio	Terri Ganey	N/C		Assistant to Stunt	Jennifer Tadlock	N/
	Stella Pacific Mgmt - stellapacific@yahoo.com -			SAFETY			
POST PRODUCTION					Set Medic	Ricky Giles	N/
	Post Supervisor		N/C		Set Medic	Bryson Williams	6:00A
	Editor		N/C	TRANSPORTATION			
LEGAL					Transportation	Todd Nelson	Per
	Production Attorney		N/C		Transportation Captain	Juan Garcia	4:00A
SAG					Process Trailer Driver	Jerry Buxbaum	6:00A
	SAG Representative	Christopher	N/C	LOCATIONS			
ANIMALS					Location Manager	Marco Rodriguez	6:00A
	Animal Wrangler	KT Hart	N/C	CATERING/CRAFT SERVICES			
					Catering		5:15A
					Craft Services	Victoria Gatts	6:00A
	Cast & Crew Background	Breakfast:	55 @	5:30 AM			
		Crew Lunch:	55 @	12:00 PM			
		Background Lunch:	1 @	12:00 PM			
WALKIE CHANNELS: 1--PRODUCTION 2--TALK OVER 4--VANITIES 7--							

Appendix D Assignments and Rubrics

Appendix D.1 Audition Scene Rubric

Audition Performance Rubric

Acting for Camera

Sean Cook

Fall '19

Student Name:

Grading:

This assignment is worth a total of 180 points.

Character specificity – was the arc of the character fully explored? Did they change? Observable?	____/30
Playing for the camera – was the work adjusted for camera? Stillness, silence, “receiving.”	____/30
Vocal Presence/Awareness – projection, Articulation, pace, did the emotional intensity fit the atmosphere of the scene, levels?	____/30
Physical presence/Awareness – embodiment, characterization, openness	____/30
Taking Notes / Adjustments – did the actor take the adjustment? Was the adjustment understood / interpreted and embodied?	____/30
Progression from rehearsal	____/30

TOTAL	____/180
--------------	----------

Appendix D.2 Two-Person Scene Rubric

Two Person Scene Performance Rubric

Acting for Camera

Sean Cook

Fall '19

Student Name:

Grading:

This assignment is worth a total of 180 points.

Character specificity – was the arc of the character fully explored? Did they change? Observable?	____/30
Playing for the camera – was the work adjusted for camera? Stillness, silence, “receiving.”	____/30
Vocal Presence/Awareness – projection, Articulation, pace, did the emotional intensity fit the atmosphere of the scene, levels?	____/30
Physical presence/Awareness – embodiment, characterization, openness	____/30
Taking Notes / Adjustments – did the actor take the adjustment? Was the adjustment understood / interpreted and embodied?	____/30
Progression from rehearsal	____/30
TOTAL	____/180

Appendix D.3 Your Artist Scene Rubric

Your Artist Scene Performance Rubric

Acting for Camera

Sean Cook

Fall '19

Student Name:

Grading:

This assignment is worth a total of 180 points.

Character specificity – was the arc of the character fully explored? Did they change? Observable?	____/30
Playing for the camera – was the work adjusted for camera? Stillness, silence, “receiving.”	____/30
Vocal Presence/Awareness – projection, Articulation, pace, did the emotional intensity fit the atmosphere of the scene, levels?	____/30
Physical presence/Awareness – embodiment, characterization, openness	____/30
Taking Notes / Adjustments – did the actor take the adjustment? Was the adjustment understood / interpreted and embodied?	____/30
Progression from rehearsal	____/30
TOTAL	____/180

Appendix D.4 Commercial Final Audition Rubric

Commercial Audition Rubric

Acting for Camera

Sean Cook

Fall '19

Student Name:

Grading:

This assignment is worth a total of 180 points.

Character specificity – Was the audition appropriate for the style of the commercial? Was the style researched and understood?	____/30
Playing for the camera / Movement – Was the work adjusted for camera? Did the actor hit all of the marks and actions requested in the group explanation?	____/30
Vocal Presence/Awareness – projection, Articulation, pace, timing with requested actions, operative words.	____/30
Physical presence/Awareness – embodiment, characterization, openness	____/30
Taking Notes / Adjustments – did the actor take the adjustment? Was the adjustment understood / interpreted and embodied?	____/30
Interview – Did the same person appear for both the interview and the audition?	____/30
TOTAL	____/180

Appendix D.5 Written Work Prompts from Weeks 4, 7, and 11

“Acting for Camera” Outline

Prompts for written work

Sean Cook – Instructor – SMC225@PITT.EDU

1. Tell me an imagined story about your character. Allow the story to be a happening outside of the realm of the scene. Be descriptive. Use images. Help me “see” them. Describe the Atmosphere. (150 words. 30 points)
2. What Archetypal Character does your character resemble? How does this influence the way they move in space? How do they move? How do they listen? Describe two moments in the scene where they “Receive” something that changes them. How does it change them? (150 words. 30 points)

Appendix D.6 Final Commercial Audition Group Explanation

Sean Cook

FIVERR Commercial

Group Instructions

1. Step into Mark 1 before speaking.
2. After "...programmers and more in seconds." Walk to Mark 2. Gesture to computer before speaking.
3. On "Unique" give a reaction to socks.
4. Begin crabwalk in front of board during lines. Landing at Mark 3 on "postponing."
5. Reaction to Check-in Attendant.
6. Walk to Mark 4 (Designers) Volume?
7. Reaction to "Brand Stylist"
8. Walk to final Mark 5. Land on mark before delivering final line.

Appendix E Sides and Copy

Appendix E.1 Audition Sides - Ainsley

EXT. THE HIGH LINE – AFTERNOON

A beautiful day in New York. Bright strolls with his sister,

AINSLEY WHITLEY (20s). She's younger and more normal (ish).

She's also an emotional sparkplug. They drink coffee.

AINSLEY

They fired you! Because of dad? The

FBI are idiots!

People look over. Bright winces --

BRIGHT

Well, I did punch a sheriff in the

face, which is frowned upon. But

I'm fine. Honestly.

BRIGHT

Don't worry. I found some extra-comfy restraints at a family-owned bondage boutique on St. Marks.

AINSLEY

Well now what am I going to get you for Christmas?

(she gets a TEXT, reads
it)

Sorry, work. I gotta report on a thing.

BRIGHT

Ooh. An Ainsley Whitley exclusive?

(announcer voice)

The Surgeon's daughter dissects another murder? Tonight at 11!

AINSLEY

(clocking his excitement)

You wish. Just, um, white collar stuff. You know, Malcolm, maybe this is a good thing, taking some time off from murder. Hey, that

should be your new affirmation!

BRIGHT

I'm taking a break from murder. You
want me to go around saying that?

AINSLEY

No, I just... I worry about you.
It's like you think it's your job
to make up for everything dad did
twenty years ago.

(off his hesitation)

It's not. You're a good guy and you
didn't do anything wrong. You can
have a normal life.

BRIGHT

Who wants that?

AINSLEY

Fine, whatever. I tried. I have to
go. Love you, mean it!

ASTORIA TOWER – LATER

A brand-new tower of glass and steel. NEWS CREWS occupy the front. Ainsley owns a plum spot. She talks to camera:

AINSLEY

Initial reports paint a disturbing
picture of the crime scene and our
suspect. Profilers call this type
of assailant a Power-Control
Killer. This is the third high-
profile homicide this month.
Sources in the NYPD fear the worst –
-New York may have a new serial
killer.

Her CAMERAMAN (30s) motions to Ainsley.

CAMERAMAN

And we're out.

The crew disperses as Ainsley dials her cell. Suddenly,
casual.

AINSLEY

Sup, bro. So, am I going to see you?
at mom's petite soiree tonight?

BRIGHT

That's tonight? Damn. I just made
plans to gouge my eyes out.

AINSLEY

Eye-gouging. That's very Oedipal.

BRIGHT

Wow. Let's leave Freud out of this.

AINSLEY

Listen, I need you there.

BRIGHT

Sorry, sis.

AINSLEY

(playing her card)

Fine. If you don't come, I'm

reporting that the son of The
Surgeon is assisting the NYPD with
their new serial killer
investigation.

BRIGHT

Wait. You can't do that.

AINSLEY

(fucking with him)

You hear that? That's Wolf Blitzer
howling for my exclusive! Oh hold
up! Now I got Anderson Cooper on
line two.

BRIGHT

So, you're blackmailing me?

AINSLEY

One hundred percent.

BRIGHT

Ainsley, you can't do this. This
serial killer... he's copying The

Surgeon.

AINSLEY

What? Is dad a person of interest?

BRIGHT

No. Maybe. Ains, you can't report
this. It would cause a panic.

AINSLEY

(a beat)

Maybe people should panic...

Appendix E.2 Audition Sides - Edrisa

INT. THE PRECINCT, MEDICAL EXAMINER'S LAB – THE NEXT DAY

Gil, Dani, and JT enter a lab that was high-tech in the 70s.

GIL

Edrisa, thanks for hustling on
this. I know these homicides were—

EDRISA (O.S.)

Amazing!

Our slightly off-center coroner, EDRISA GUILFOYLE (30S), looks up from her work, fumbles with her glasses, and beams:

EDRISA (CONT'D)

I've only read about The Surgeon's methods in textbooks. To see them carried out in person is a real thrill!

VANESSA'S BODY lies with the TWO OTHER VICTIMS.

EDRISA (CONT'D)

Three victims. Examination of the first two revealed hemorrhagic infiltration into the tissue of the neck. Victim Three is different. A series of paralytic drugs shut her body down. One organ at a time. It must have been agony.

BRIGHT (O.S.)

It was.

Enter Bright, looking great for man who doesn't sleep.

BRIGHT (CONT'D)

I imagine.

EDRISSA

Oh, Well. Hello.

Bright examines the cadavers as Edrisa examines Bright.

BRIGHT

This stitch work is amazing. And

These trunk incisions...

(looking to Edrisa)

You're like Picasso with

formaldehyde.

EDRISA

Thank you. And you're... very

slender.

BRIGHT

Thanks. Most food makes me sick.

I'm Bright.

EDRISA

Yes, you are. I'm Dr. Guilfoyle. Ms.

Dr. Guilfoyle. Or just Edrisa. Call
me that.

(fuck it)

I'm single.

GIL

Oh-kay. Not to interrupt whatever
this is, but--?

notices something on The Cadaver.

BRIGHT

What do you think about these?
bruises, they aren't from metal...

(studying)

My guess is quarter-inch thick
Japanese-style bondage rope. Simple
but...

EDRISA

(invigorated)

Effective!

(then)

I mean. Yes. I agree. About the
rope. And it's effectiveness.

And... everything else you just
said. And! Those bruises don't
match the time of death.

BRIGHT

That's interesting.

(noticing on her desk)

Is that hard candy available?

EDRISA

Help yourself. Please.

She holds up the bowl. He takes one. It's weirdly sensual.

GIL

Edrisa. Edrisa. What do you mean?
they don't match the time of death?

EDRISA

(composing herself)

Yes, right. The bruises are from
earlier. Three days, at least.

(MORE)

EDRISA (CONT'D)

These women were all restrained,
but it wasn't on the night they
were murdered. Perhaps they were
into some sort of fantasy play.

BRIGHT

That's very good. Three victims.
All exhibiting bruises consistent
with BDSM activities. What if the
same professional Dom was seeing
all three of them?

GIL

That's the connection we've been
looking for.

Bright smiles to Edrisa as they exit.

BRIGHT

Thanks. That was fantastic.

EDRISA

Yes, it was.

On her desk, she finds an ORIGAMI ROSE made from his candy wrapper. She smiles: this could be fun!

Appendix E.3 Audition Sides - Martin

INT. PRISON – MARTIN’S –FLASHBACK

Bright takes meticulous notes in a journal. Martin – still in restraints -- pontificates:

MARTIN

A killer has to be precise. It's
all about the details. That was
Dahmer's mistake. Seven heads in a
fridge? It boggles the mind!

BRIGHT

Keeping heads in a fridge?

MARTIN

No. Not locking them up! That's my point. You have to think like the predator and the prey.

BRIGHT

Almost like a detective.

MARTIN

Public servants in polyester suits?
Please, we're nothing like them.

BRIGHT

You mean you. You're nothing like them.

Bright shifts in his chair. **Troubled.** It's almost imperceptible, but Martin notes it --

MARTIN

What is it?

BRIGHT

Last semester. . . an FBI Profiler
spoke in my Behavioral Sciences
class. The work they do is
fascinating. So...

(carefully)

I applied to Quantico.

Martin cocks his head. Angered. He was not expecting

MARTIN

The FBI? You think they'll trust
you? Your father's a serial killer.

BRIGHT

. . . who taught me everything there
is to know about the criminal mind.
I'm just putting it to good use.

MARTIN

What? No. I forbid it!

His fist slams down on a table. Rattling his shackles.

BRIGHT

Goodbye, Dr. Whitley.

Bright goes to the door. KNOCKS TWICE.

MARTIN

That's it? A triumphant good-bye.

The Surgeon's son making good?

BRIGHT

Something like that.

MARTIN

You can't leave, Malcolm.

A **CHILL** comes over the room. Bright sees his BREATH. Huh? HE
KNOCKS LOUDER.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Mister David isn't coming.

Martin stands. His arms fall to his sides. **Where did the shackles go?** It's suddenly freezing in
here.

BRIGHT

(REALIZING)

This isn't real.

He can't move. His father reaches out --

BRIGHT (CONT'D)

Don't touch me.

-- and PUTS HIS HAND on his son's shoulder.

MARTIN

Remember: We're the same. . .

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL, MARTIN WHITLY'S CELL- CONTINUOUS

It's new and big and amazing, with high windows. There's an antique desk. Classic bookcases line the walls. Martin stands up, his arms manacled. He sees his son. A tense beat, then - -

MARTIN

Malcolm! My boy! It's been too long.

BRIGHT

Hello, Dr. Whitley.

(re: the room)

This is . . . nice.

MARTIN

The hospital needed help with a few
special cases. You'd be amazed what
our Saudi friends will pay a
disgraced Cardiothoracic surgeon.

BRIGHT

Well, you did operate on two
presidents.

MARTIN

And I saved Dick Cheney's life.
Twice. They should have me locked
up for that alone!

Bright smiles. His first time. Martin appreciates that.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Enough about me. To what do I owe
the pleasure of this visit?

BRIGHT

You have a copycat.

MARTIN

Really? I'm flattered.

(off his look)

And deeply concerned.

Bright puts a FILE on the desk, which is on the edge of the
rug. Martin flips through it.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Three murders. Two from early in my
career. And then-- ah, interesting.

He copied "the waitress, "that
wasn't easy. Color me impressed.

BRIGHT

Why do you think he chose those?
early murders? They aren't as
difficult or famous.

MARTIN

That's true. But they are excellent
practice for his third kill. . . a
gold medal effort in my opinion.

BRIGHT

Her name was Vanessa.

MARTIN

(defensive)

I get it, Malcolm, I'm the worst.
But don't tell me you're not
fascinated! We used to talk about
murder like others talk about
sports.

BRIGHT

Used to, Dr. Whitley. That's not me
anymore.

MARTIN

Your killer isn't only copycatting
me. He's practicing, like I did.
All these murders comprise a

quartet. Four killings of
increasing complexity.

BRIGHT

You're saying there's going to be
one more?

MARTIN

Yes, a final masterpiece. Question
is: how did he know my methods?
They were never published.

BRIGHT

You showed him.

Bright places the DRAWINGS found at Nico's on the desk.

Martin takes them. His brow furrows. He grows upset.

MARTIN

I didn't give him anything. I drew
these for my collection.

BRIGHT

What collection?

Martin points to a huge bookshelf lined with his JOURNALS.

MARTIN

My study of murder. A personal
journey and scientific analysis.

Still working on the title. I like
My Life as a Killer but it feels a
little first-thought. These are
from Book 19.

(growing upset)

This is outrageous. I was robbed,
violated even!

BRIGHT

And three women died.

MARTIN

Sure. That, too. There can be
multiple outrages. But it wasn't
me.

BRIGHT

I need to go. Goodbye, Dr. Whitley.

MARTIN

It was good to see you.

(as Bright exits)

I miss you.

(Bright turns back)

I do. You're my son. I love you.

BRIGHT

You're a predatory sociopath and
incapable of love.

MARTIN

Nobody's perfect.

Appendix E.4 Audition Sides - Nico

DANI

Nico? Nico. Is anyone else here?

HE POINTS WITH HIS EYES to his left. . . BEHIND YOU!

DANI (CONT'D)

Help Bright. I got him. I think. . .

BRIGHT

Nico. . . my name's Bright. I'm here t
to help.

NICO

I didn't want to do it. . . he made
me call clients. Set up dates. He's
a psycho, man! He killed them.

JT

(cutting the restraints)

It's okay. We're here now.

NICO

You gotta get me out of this chair!

Nico starts to break down. Problem is . . . he's not going
anywhere. A three-inch thick STEEL CUFF shackles his LEFT
WRIST to the chair. Wires encircle it.

BRIGHT

Oh WOW. JT. Little problem here.

A flip-phone on the bottom of the chair RINGS and A RED LIGHT

Clicks on under the mass of wires on Nico's Left wrist.

JT

Bright. You see that?

Bright locates the MOMB under Nico's chair. A TIMER counts

down the seconds: 86, 85. . .

BRIGHT

It's a bomb. And he's welded to it.

NICO

WHAT? No! No!!

JT

Dude! He didn't need to hear that.

BRIGHT

I'm pretty sure he was going to
find out in -- seventy-two seconds.

Bright races to the TABLE and looks at the TOOLS. He stops.

There's an ALL STEEL AXE. Well, fuck.

BRIGHT (CONT'D)

JT. Kitchen. Get all the ice you can

No time for questions. JT goes. Bright grabs the axe. He
lowers Nico's chair so his back is on the floor.

NICO

What's happening?

BRIGHT

I'm going to chop off your hand.

NICO

WHAT!?!

Bright hesitates. Can he really do this?

BRIGHT

There's no other option. And
reattachment surgery has really
come a long way. Deep breaths!

Nico's manacled hand stretches away from his body. Bright
lines up the axe with his wrist. JT runs in with an IGLOO
COOLER. He does not like the look of this.

Appendix E.5 Two-Person Scenes – Bo and Carly

“DAYS OF OUR LIVES”

INT. –BO'S BOAT –DAY

BO ENTERS AND LOOKS AROUND

BO

Carly! Carly... where are you, Princess?

SUDDENLY HE SPOTS A SUITCASE ON THE BED, HALF-PACKED.

BO

What the hell?

CARLY ENTERS

CARLY

Bo...I'm glad you're here.

BO

What's going on here? You going
away on business or something?

CARLY

Not exactly...

BO

Then What? (OFF HER SERIOUS EXPRESSION)
Hey...don't keep me standing here playing
twenty questions. You know I'm no good at games.

CARLY

I don't know how to say this, Bo.

BO

(SMILES) You better figure out a way fast
Because I'm starting to get some crazy
ideas running through my head...

CARLY

I'm leaving. Tonight. Forever.

BO

Let's take this nice and slow

You're leaving me? For real?

CARLY

I don't have a choice

BO

Save the bull, okay, "I don't have a

choice" is a line. I ask you why you're

going, I sure as hell deserve a straight answer!

CARLY

Don't do this, Bo. Just let go...

SHE STARTS TO WALK AWAY, BO STOPS HER.

BO

Don't walk out that door, damn it!

CARLY

Bo...

Appendix E.6 Two-Person Scene – William and Spike

WILLIAM

So – any messages?

SPIKE

Yea, I wrote a couple down.

WILLIAM

Two? That's it?

SPIKE

You want me to write down all your
messages?

William closes his eyes in exasperation.

WILLIAM

Who were the ones you don't write
down from?

SPIKE

Ahem -- let's see -- ahem. No. Gone
completely. Oh no, wait. There was –

one from your mum: she said don't
forget lunch and her leg's hurting
again.

WILLIAM

Right. No one else?

SPIKE

Absolutely not.

Spike leans back and relaxes.

SPIKE

Though if we're going for this
obsessive writing-down-all-messages
thing -- some American girl called
Anna called a few days ago.

William freezes -- then looks at Spike.

185

WILLIAM

What did she say?

146

SPIKE

Well, it was genuinely bizarre...

she said, hi -- it's Anna -- and then

she said, call me at the Ritz -- and

then gave herself a completely

different name.

WILLIAM

Which was?

SPIKE

Absolutely no idea. Remembering one

names' bad enough...

Appendix E.7 Same Day Commercial Copy

****Please note: The tone for this should be VERY cinematic. The directors are feature directors who are used to very high-level theatrical performers. This should feel honest, frank and heartfelt. Prepare as if this was for a dramatic movie and the characters are talking to their forbidden love. NO ACTING PLEASE. Choose the role that best suits your type.**

PARENT: I solemnly swear to love you, hold you, and keep you as my little secret. I love you; I need you...and even if I have to hide you from my husband and kids, our relationship is going to last. We'll get together before parent teacher meetings...I'll share you with my besties.

It'll just be you.

And me.

HIPSTER: I solemnly swear to love you, hold you and keep you as my little secret. We'll stay in bed and watch movies together. I love you. I need you. Our relationship is going to last. We'll get together as much as we can. Obviously after a ton of raging blowouts, and we'll hook up in the parking lot after work.

It'll just be you. And me.

Appendix E.8 Commercial Final

FIVERR GENERAL SPOT

INT OFFICE

We see an OFFICE with a huge pile of To Do's and forms relating to design/websites/animation... when suddenly the PRESENTER pops out and talks to camera.

PRESENTER

So, you need a freelancer. The
obvious choice is going to Fiverr
and finding designers, programmers
and more in seconds.

She walks to a desk and points to a computer, which generates
a floating screen of the Fiverr homepage.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

But you're not obvious. You're
mysterious, unique, a
nonconformist.

She puts on SUNGLASSES FOR "mystery" and reveals she's
wearing MISMATCHING SOCKS. "Unique."

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

You wanna try finding freelancers
yourself, without Fiverr. Because
you have time.

She walks by a wall with a CALENDAR that has underlined dates
marked in red. She walks by a BUSINESS GRAPH.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)

It's a not like you've got a
deadline, or a business to run. Or
that trip to Europe you keep
postponing.

She walks by a FLIGHT CHECK-IN DESK and hands a CHECK-IN
ATTENDANT an old ticket to Yugoslavia.

CHECK-IN ATTENDANT

Yugoslavia no longer exists, ma am.

Upon rejection, she walks over to dozens of DESIGNERS.

PRESENTER

You'd rather spend it interviewing
fifty graphic designers just to
make one logo.

DESIGNER

I prefer "brand stylist."

She rolls her eyes and looks into camera.

PRESENTER

Instead of easily finding a top
rated one on Fiverr.

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